



# Heart-Check Brand Activation Guide

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We want to make it easy for you to get the most value out of your certification as possible and enable you to get started right away. No matter the size of your business, we know marketing and promotions are key components to your success, and we're here to help.

This guide is a valuable reference as you determine how and where you want to promote your Heart-Check certification. In this guide, you'll find templated materials for marketing, social media and media relations as well as general promotional tips and resources. We will continue to develop this resource over time to give you new content to work with. Be sure to check [\*\*heartcheck.org/certify\*\*](https://heartcheck.org/certify) periodically for the latest additions and updates.

The Heart-Check Food Certification Program has clearly defined graphic standards that must be followed. To get started, check out our Heart-Check Brand & Style User Guide; you'll not only find graphic standards, but details on packaging and promotions as well.

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# Congratulations on your Heart-Check Certification!

We're glad you want to show your customers you're participating in the Heart-Check Food Certification Program. When customers see the mark on your package or on a SmartLabel, you have helped remove the guesswork and they'll instantly know they can trust that your product is heart-healthy and feel good about their purchasing decision.

*75% of consumers report that they are familiar with the Heart-Check symbol. 75% of consumers also say they are more likely to purchase foods that feature the Heart-Check mark, regardless of age or number of kids in their household.<sup>1</sup>*

## Your Heart-Check Contacts

We're here to help you every step of the way. If you need any assistance in how to use the Heart-Check mark within your marketing, consider us your co-collaborator and feel free to reach out to us. For any questions about the contents of this guide, please contact your Business Development Manager. If you don't know who that is, reach out to Ashley Birdsall, and she'll direct you to the right person.

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# Promotion Review

Within this guide are elements you can use as they are, as a plug-in-play, that do not require the need to go through the promo review process. However, please send a copy to us, so we can see how this content is being used and which content is valuable to you.

If you include any of this content with your own content, alter in any way (and so on) this includes advertising, marketing and promotions that feature the Heart-Check mark or refer to the product's certification, the content must be submitted to the American Heart Association (AHA) for promo review process and written approval. To submit materials for review and approval, e-mail them to [reviews@heart.org](mailto:reviews@heart.org).

To easily identify which elements need review and which don't, we have placed the following icons throughout this guide:

### Plug-n-Play



### Requires Promo Review Form



# Leveraging the Heart- Check Value Proposition





## Sample Talking Points

1. (NAME OF COMPANY) is now participating in The American Heart Association®'s Heart-Check Food Certification Program. This certification is based on the American Heart Association's nutrition requirements for heart-healthy food. Look for the Heart-Check mark on these products today: (NAME OF PRODUCT).
2. The Heart-Check Food Certification Program has been guiding shoppers to healthier choices since 1995. Consumer research shows that the American Heart Association® is the authority most trusted by consumers to decide if a product may display a nutrition message or Heart-Check mark.
3. All our Heart-Check certified products were reviewed for compliance with the Heart-Check nutrition requirements by American Heart Association® staff.
4. In 2014, [a research study](#) found that people who report eating foods that meet the Heart-Check Food certification requirements are more likely to eat healthier and have fewer heart disease risk factors.
5. (NAME OF COMPANY) values the American Heart Association® Heart-Check certification of (NAME OF PRODUCT). Our goal is to maintain the certification of this product to provide our consumers with heart-healthy options.

## Program Resources

At [heartcheck.org/certify](http://heartcheck.org/certify) we provide a host of resources to help answer your questions as well as to market and promote your participation in the Heart-Check program. These include the comprehensive Program Guide and Style Guide as well as marketing materials such as infographics, images and consumer research.

# Sample Website Promotion Statement



The American Heart Association® takes the health and wellness of all Americans to heart. That's why, more than 20 years ago, the American Heart Association® established the Heart-Check mark. It gives consumers an easy, reliable way to identify heart-healthy foods that can be part of a sensible eating plan. There are currently more than 800 Heart-Check certified products, including (NAME OF PRODUCT).

This Heart-Check mark icon is the most widely recognized and trusted icon on packages. It helps millions of people like you across the country make healthier choices about what your family eats. To learn more about the Heart-Check mark and the qualifying nutritional requirements, visit [www.heartcheck.org](http://www.heartcheck.org).



# Social Media Posting Suggestions

Best demonstrated practices recommend two weekly Facebook posts – one awareness/added value post every Wednesday afternoon, and one incentive posting every Friday afternoon. Awareness/added value post could be educational or how to use your product, or a “did you know” ...

## Recommended Facebook Posting Times:

**Posts during these times average between 18-34% more engagement on Facebook:**

Wednesday around 3 PM

Thursday and Friday between 1–4 PM

Saturday and Sunday around Noon

**In general, posts during these times increase shares and clickthroughs:**

9:00 AM

1:00 PM

3:00 PM

## Facebook Posting Suggestions

Use hashtags in Facebook posts (1 or 2 only) to encourage people to engage in further conversation about the relevant topic. A study by Social Bakers, which examined how Facebook engagement correlates hashtag use, suggests only 1 to 2 hashtags as anything more than that lowers engagement.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Tips From 13 Experts On How To Use Hashtags On Facebook



# Social Media Suggestions and Sample Messages



**IMPORTANT: Only products that are certified may be mentioned. You cannot reference the brand line or group of products if all the products are not certified.**

Approved hashtags and usernames: #heartcheckmark, and #LifeisWhy and @LifeisWhy, and #American\_Heart and @American\_Heart, can be used without pre-approval.

## Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram Posting Ideas:

- **Pantry party: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Tag your best bud and you both could win a pantry of #heartcheckmark certified @ (NAME of PRODUCT).
- **Thelma to your Louise: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Tag the Thelma to your Louise and you both could score free #heartcheckmark certified @ (NAME OF PRODUCT) goodies!
- **Good workout follow-up: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Don't follow a good workout with unhealthy habits; name your favorite #HeartCheck certified @ (NAME OF PRODUCT) #heartcheckmark.
- **Date night buddy: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Staying in is the new going out. Tag your date night buddy for a chance to win free #heartcheckmark certified @ (NAME OF PRODUCT) snacks.
- **Significant other: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Tag your significant other to make sure they're eating, snacking and cooking healthy for a chance to win free #heartcheckmark certified @ (NAME OF PRODUCT) groceries!
- **Family freebies: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Tag a family member and you can both bring home a ton of #heartcheckmark certified @ (NAME OF PRODUCT) freebies!
- **Snack attack: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Grab a snack that doesn't attack! Look for the #heartcheckmark on certified @ (NAME OF PRODUCT) for a healthy snack.
- **Key indicator: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
It's not just advertisement on a box. The #heartcheckmark is your key indicator to making a heart-healthy choice with @ (NAME OF PRODUCT).
- **All about the love: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Love yourself and your family with #heartcheckmark certified products. Check out @ (NAME OF PRODUCT) to go heart healthy.
- **We did it: (Insert Heart-Check mark)**  
We did it! @ (NAME OF PRODUCT) received the American Heart Association's #heartcheckmark for the (INSERT NUMBER) year in a row! Want to know why this mark is important?  
Learn more about our certification journey here: (LINK TO COMPANY CONTENT).



# Social Media Suggestions and Sample Messages, cont'd

## Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram Posting Ideas, cont'd:

- **Big news: (Insert Heart-Check mark)**  
@(PRODUCT HANDLE) is now #American\_Heart #heartcheckmark certified! Read more about our big news here: (LINK TO PRESS RELEASE).
- **Proudly displaying: (Insert Heart-Check mark)**  
@(PRODUCT HANDLE) is proudly showing off our new #American\_Heart #heartcheckmark! Learn more: (LINK TO COMPANY SITE).
- **Thrilled: (Insert Heart-Check mark)**  
The trusted American Heart Association Heart-Check mark will be displayed on @(NAME OF PRODUCT) again this year! We're thrilled to have received the mark again. Read more about our certification: (LINK TO COMPANY CONTENT) #heartcheckmark.
- **Trusted mark: (Insert Heart-Check mark)**  
Trusted @American\_Heart #heartcheckmark will be on @(NAME OF PRODUCT) again this year! Read about our certification: (LINK).
- **Easy shopping: (Insert Heart-Check mark)**  
Healthy grocery shopping can be easy! @(NAME OF PRODUCT) now bears the @American\_Heart #heartcheckmark! (LINK).
- **Healthier choice: (Insert Heart-Check mark)**  
Want a healthier choice for snacks or meals? @(NAME OF PRODUCT) bears the @American\_Heart #heartcheckmark. Learn more: (LINK).

## Twitter Specific Posting Ideas:

- **Good workout follow-up: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Don't follow a good workout with unhealthy habits; name your favorite #heartcheckmark certified @(NAME OF PRODUCT).
- **Pantry party: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Tag your best bud and you both could win a pantry of #heartcheckmark certified @(NAME OF PRODUCT).
- **Thelma to your Louise: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Tag the Thelma to your Louise and you both could score free #heartcheckmark certified @(NAME OF PRODUCT) goodies!
- **Family freebies: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Tag a family member and you can both bring home a ton of #heartcheckmark certified @(NAME OF PRODUCT) freebies!
- **Snack attack: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Grab a snack that doesn't attack! Look for the #heartcheckmark on certified @(NAME OF PRODUCT) for a healthy snack.
- **Key indicator: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
It's not just advertisement on a box. The #heartcheckmark is your key indicator to making a heart-healthy choice with @(NAME OF PRODUCT).
- **All about the love: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Love yourself and your family with #heartcheckmark certified products. Check out @(NAME OF PRODUCT) to go heart healthy.
- **Staying In: (Be sure to add a graphic with this post)**  
Staying in is the new going out. Tag your staying in buddy for a chance to win free #heartcheckmark certified @(NAME OF PRODUCT) snacks.
- **Big news: (Insert Heart-Check mark logo)**  
@(NAME OF PRODUCT) is now #American\_Heart #heartcheckmark certified! Read more about our big news here: (LINK TO PRESS RELEASE).
- **Proudly displaying: (Insert Heart-Check mark logo)**  
@(NAME OF PRODUCT) is proudly showing off our new #American\_Heart #heartcheckmark!



# Social Media Suggestions and Sample Messages, cont'd

## Facebook Specific Posting Ideas:

- **Big news: (Insert Heart-Check mark logo)**  
Our @(NAME OF PRODUCT) meets the American Heart Association®'s Heart-Check Food Certification Program criteria and now displays of the iconic #heartcheckmark! Read more about the certification and how @(NAME OF PRODUCT) is helping you stay heart-healthy: (LINK TO COMPANY CONTENT).
- **Proudly displaying: (Insert Heart-Check mark logo)**  
@(NAME OF PRODUCT) is now a proud bearer of the American Heart Association®'s #heartcheckmark! Since 1995, this certification program has guided consumers just like you to make healthier choices when shopping. Learn more about our certification: (LINK TO COMPANY CONTENT).
- **Grocery Shopping: (Insert Heart-Check mark logo)**  
Don't let grocery shopping be daunting when trying to eat healthy. Let the American Heart Association®'s #heartcheckmark be your guide. @(NAME OF PRODUCT) is certified and ready to be part of your heart-healthy eating plan! Want to know more? (LINK TO COMPANY CONTENT).
- **Look for the Heart-Check mark: (Insert Heart-Check mark logo)**  
Look for the American Heart Association®'s #heartcheckmark and take some guesswork out of your grocery shopping. @(NAME OF PRODUCT) proudly displays the mark to help you make healthier choices when shopping and meal planning. Learn more about how certification works: [www.heartcheck.org](http://www.heartcheck.org).

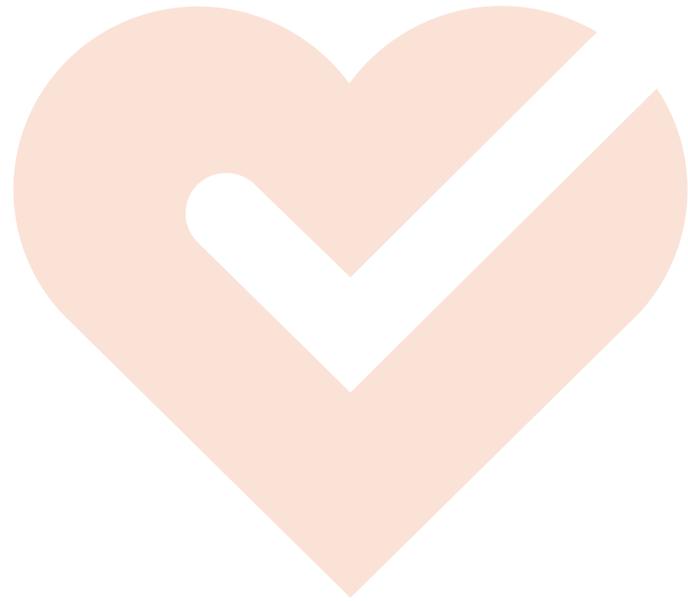
## Instagram & Pinterest Specific Posting Ideas:

- **Show off: (Insert artwork)**  
Show off a photo of you with your favorite @(COMPANY NAME) #heartcheckmark certified product for a chance to win more of your favorite @(COMPANY NAME) products.
- **Share a recipe: (Insert artwork)**  
Share your favorite heart-healthy recipes using a #heartcheckmark certified @(NAME OF COMPANY) product and tell us which product was a #heartcheckmark certified product.
- **Share your product: (Insert artwork)**  
Share with us your most go-to Heart-Check certified (NAME OF PRODUCT).

## YouTube Specific Posting Ideas:

- **Fun ways to call out your Heart-Check mark certification**  
Create YouTube videos that call out your product certification. When you do this, please follow the American Heart Association Review Process.

# AHA Healthy Living Communications Calendar



Throughout the year, the American Heart Association communications team focuses on key topics for promotions and uses the monthly messaging calendar below to guide marketing, media relations and social media activities. Please consider using the calendar topics and sample messages as a guide when creating a marketing/media strategy for your new Heart-Check certified product. [The Healthy Living Communications Calendar](#) can be found online with the latest updates and new topics.

If you're interested in strategizing with us on how you might incorporate these push periods into your calendar, we would be happy to work with you. Contact your Business Development Manager for more information.

Please feel free to share this calendar.

## AHA Healthy Living Communications Calendar

	 <b>January</b>	 <b>February</b>	 <b>March</b>
AHA Platform	Advocacy	American Heart Month	Nutrition
Healthy Living Theme	New Year, New You	Love Yourself, Love Your Family	Spring into Healthy Habits
Sample Topics	Establishing Healthier Habits, Healthier Food & Beverage Options for Employees, Eating More Fruits & Vegetables, Increasing Physical Activity, Putting Your Health First	Healthy Tips for Families, Family-Friendly Recipes, Break Up with Salt, Work/Life Balance & Your Health	Nutrition Month, Sodium Reduction, World Salt Awareness Week, Benefits of Fruits & Vegetables, Spring Gardens

	 <b>April</b>	 <b>May</b>	 <b>June</b>
AHA Platform	Physical Activity	Stroke	CPR & Summer Safety
Healthy Living Theme	Spring into Action	Healthy Habits Start with Mom	Family Meals/Cooking Together
Sample Topics	National Walking Day, Benefits of Exercise, Heart Walk, Squeeze Fitness into Your Work Day, Best Snacks for Pre- and Post-Game	Moms Caring for Themselves, On-the-go Snacks, Physical Activity Around the House, Healthy Habits Start at Home, Keeping Fit during the Summer	Simple Budget-Friendly Meals for the Family, Healthy Grilling, Men's Health, Family-Friendly Activities

## AHA Healthy Living Communications Calendar

	 July	 August	 September
AHA Platform	Quality of Care	Heart Walk	Patient Education
Healthy Living Theme	Renewed Spark, Happier Travels	Back to School, Back to Basics	
Get Out and Play	Establishing Healthier Habits, Healthier Food & Beverage Options for Employees, Eating More Fruits & Vegetables, Increasing Physical Activity, Putting Your Health First	Healthy Tips for Families, Family-Friendly Recipes, Break Up with Salt, Work/Life Balance & Your Health	Nutrition Month, Sodium Reduction, World Salt Awareness Week, Benefits of Fruits & Vegetables, Spring Gardens

	 October	 November	 December
AHA Platform	Diversity/Disparities	Research Funding	Planned/Year End Giving
Healthy Living Theme	No Tricks, Just Healthy Treats	Holiday Health Hacks	Healthy Holidays
Sample Topics	Healthier Treats That Are Not Tricky, Physical Activity Needed to Burn Off Halloween Treats, Restaurant Pitfalls	National Eating Healthy Day, Healthy Twists on Favorite Recipes, Holiday Bloat -- Try Lower Sodium Options, Healthy Holiday Menu Planning, Family Activities for All Generations	Healthy Gift Giving Guide, Maintaining Your Weight during the Holidays, Healthy Recipe Swap, Healthier Office Parties

# I Spy...

**A game you can  
post to social media.  
This can also be a  
campaign.**

## I Spy...

Play a game with your children as you shop for your favorite (COMPANY NAME) products.

Find how many (COMPANY NAME) American Heart Association® Heart-Check mark products are in your grocery store and let us know on our Facebook page with (YOUR PERSONALIZED TAG).

# Sample Blog





We have included a sample blog that you can use as a guide for your own blog or company website and some additional thought starters to spread the word on your new Heart-Check mark certification.

**These require promo review before publishing!**

## Sample Blog

Just how easy is it to be heart-healthy when life is always go, go, go? We know that life is full-throttle and you barely have time to make a grocery list let alone a nutritious meal. Or so you thought. (NAME OF COMPANY) is making it easier for you to identify healthy choices when meal planning for the week or making a quick grocery store run.

(NAME OF CERTIFIED PRODUCT) recently received the American Heart Association®'s Heart-Check Food Certification. Heart-Check makes it easier for you to identify foods that meet the American Heart Association's nutritional requirements.

(USE THE FOLLOWING TO INCLUDE HEART-CHECK CERTIFIED RECIPE IF YOU HAVE ONE.)

Now that you've got our healthy product in your basket, how about a recipe to help you get creative in the kitchen? Check out this Heart-Check certified recipe using (NAME OF CERTIFIED PRODUCT), and surprise your family and friends with just how tasty healthy eating can be!

(Add your recipe and visuals to the blog for more impact.)

# Blog Content Ideas



Use the **Healthy Living Communication Calendar** in this guide to inspire future blog posts. For example, consider some of the following ideas:

- An announcement about your certification (see above) to help get the word out. It can be similar to a press release (see next section).
- Healthy eating during the holiday season is always a popular topic. Offer consumers tips and provide free tools (such as recipes), highlighting your Heart-Check certified product(s).
- Provide tips and best practices on healthy and budget-friendly grocery shopping.
- Share some fun, fast ways to prepare your certified product.
- For back-to-school in August and September, offer ways to create healthier school lunches or snacks using your certified product.
- Blog about family-friendly dinner ideas using your Heart-Check product
- Blog about how to eat healthy on-the-run using your Heart-Check product
- Reference the Healthy Living Communications Calendar for your monthly blog topic ideas
- When your product is renewed, post a blog that you're at it again, and have achieved the Heart-Check mark for another year!

# Press Release Content & Boiler Plates



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME

PHONE/EMAIL/NAME OF COMPANY

## **(NAME OF PRODUCT) is Now Certified by the American Heart Association Heart-Check Food Certification Program**

CITY - DATE – (NAME OF COMPANY) is helping its consumers eat healthier by proudly bearing the American Heart Association®’s Heart-Check mark on (NAME OF PRODUCT).

The mark will be prominently displayed on (NAME OF PRODUCT) packages starting (DATE OF ON-PACK DISPLAY). The iconic Heart-Check mark helps take the guesswork out when reading Nutrition Facts and label information, giving consumers peace of mind that what they are consuming meets the nutritional requirements of the American Heart Association.

“We are thrilled to see the Heart-Check mark on (NAME OF PRODUCT),” stated (NAME OF SPOKESPERSON). “We hope that with this certification and our consumer outreach we can help inspire and guide individuals to make healthier choices in the grocery store or when meal prepping at home.”

The Heart-Check mark has been helping consumers identify foods that can be part of an overall healthy eating pattern for more than 20 years. To learn more about (NAME OF PRODUCT)’s Heart-Check certification, and for tips on getting healthier, visit our website: (INSERT COMPANY LINK HERE).

###

### About the Heart-Check Mark

The American Heart Association established the Heart-Check mark in 1995 to give consumers an easy, reliable system for identifying heart-healthy foods as a first step in building a sensible eating plan. Products that display the Heart-Check mark have been certified by the American Heart Association to meet criteria for heart-healthy foods. To learn more about the Heart-Check mark, to see a complete list of certified products and participating companies, and to learn more about the nutritional criteria, visit [www.heartcheck.org](http://www.heartcheck.org).

### About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – two of the leading causes of death in the world. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based association is the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. To learn more or to get involved, call 1-800-AHA-USA1, visit [heart.org](http://heart.org) or call any of our offices around the country. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Press  
Release  
Content  
Ideas





An announcement is usually the best first step when starting your promotional process. However, there may be other times during the year that you want to promote your Heart-Check certified product in the news. Here are some ideas:

- Is your company focused on staff wellness programs? Highlight all the great things you're doing at your home office to help keep your colleagues healthy. Be sure to plug your new Heart-Check certification to keep your consumers' hearts healthy too!
- Creating new recipes based on your newly certified product? The news media love recipes, so get creative with your Heart-Check product and help spread the word to your consumers that you've got their heart-health top of mind!
- Renewing your Heart-Check certification? Once your product is renewed, you can send another release announcing another year with the Heart-Check Food Certification Program!
- If you're fresh out of ideas, be sure to use the [Healthy Living Communications Calendar](#) for press release ideas

# Newsletter Content Ideas



- Provide Heart-Check certified product awareness and added value articles such as: Did you know... Be sure not to make this salesy as this is how you build your audience by providing relevant, interesting content.
- Explore the [Healthy Living Communications Calendar](#) in this guide, and think through what your company/product might be doing that ties in to a seasonal theme or topic.
- Recipes are always popular in a newsletter, whether staff or consumer. It's a great way to get creative with your Heart-Check certified product(s).
- Give your readers healthy eating tips and highlight your Heart-Check certified product(s). For example, break down [how to read a nutrition label](#) and let them know what they should be looking for (see sample article below). The [AHA website](#) is a great place to find practical, science-based articles about healthy living.
- For turnkey content, subscribe to the AHA's monthly [Healthy Living](#) and quarterly [Heart At Work](#) e-newsletters to receive timely links to articles and tips you can share with your readers.
- Interview your CEO about the Heart-Check mark and your product. It's a great way to highlight your company's concern for the health and wellbeing of your consumers or staff.



# Sample Article



## What's in a Label? Check Nutrition Facts and ingredients to know what's in the food you eat!

When you're trying to eat healthier, you need to know about the nutritional value of the foods you eat. The Nutrition Facts label and ingredients list on food packages provide this information and can help you make healthier choices – but you need to understand what you're reading.

Ingredients are listed in order of quantity. For example, if a jar of salsa lists tomatoes first, you know there are more tomatoes in the product than anything else. But that's only part of the story.

Some ingredients can go by other names. Sugar may be listed as high-fructose corn syrup, cane sugar, rice syrup, agave nectar, and so on. Sodium may go by salt, sodium benzoate, sodium nitrate, disodium or monosodium glutamate (MSG) and other names. Trans fats won't be listed as trans fats, but instead as ingredients that contain this type of fat, such as partially hydrogenated oil and hydrogenated oil. Knowing this information is important, because along with high levels of saturated fats, too much added sugar, sodium and trans fats can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke.

To find out the amounts of nutrients in your food, you'll need to consult the Nutrition Facts label. Here are some tips to help you understand the information on the Nutrition Facts label:

- **SERVINGS:** The serving information at the top of the label tells you the size of a single serving and the total number of servings in the package.
- **CALORIES:** Note the calories per serving and the number of servings per package. If you double the servings you eat, you're also doubling the calories and nutrients.
- **NUTRIENTS:** The American Heart Association recommends limiting certain nutrients, such as saturated fat, trans fat and sodium. But be sure to get enough of beneficial nutrients such as dietary fiber, protein, calcium, iron, vitamins and others needed daily.
- **% DAILY VALUE (DV):** This tells you the percentage of each nutrient in a single serving, in terms of the daily recommended amount. If you want to consume less of a nutrient (such as saturated fat or sodium), choose foods with a lower % DV – 5 percent or less. If you want to consume more of a nutrient (such as fiber), go for a higher % DV – 20 percent or more.

The Heart-Check mark makes it easy to identify foods that can be part of a heart-healthy eating plan. Look for the American Heart Association® name along with the red heart with a white check mark on the package. It means the food has been certified to meet Heart-Check nutrition requirements that limit saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and added sugars, and promote consumption of beneficial nutrients. The nutrition requirements are food category-based and intended for healthy people over age two. People with special medical needs or dietary restrictions should follow the advice of their health professionals. Learn more at [www.heartcheck.org](http://www.heartcheck.org).

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# Sample Article



## Healthy Eating for Kids

Childhood obesity has become a major health concern, causing health problems in children that previously weren't seen until adulthood, such as high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and high cholesterol. If you're a parent or caregiver, you can help your kids develop healthy habits early in life that will bring lifelong benefits. Teach them how to make smart choices and how delicious those decisions can be!

**Be a good role model.** You don't have to be perfect all the time, but if kids see you trying to eat right and make wise choices, they'll notice. You'll send a message that good health is important in your family.

**Keep things positive.** Kids don't like to hear what they can't have, so focus on what they can have instead. Give them a few healthy options and let them choose. Praise them for good decisions.

**Make dinnertime family time.** Turn off the screens and develop healthy habits — as well as conversation skills — together.

**Get kids involved in planning and cooking meals.** They'll learn valuable skills and may be more willing to try things they've helped make.

**Make a game of reading food labels.** You'll all learn more about what you're eating. Ask your kids to help you find the Heart-Check mark on foods in the grocery store.

**Include more vegetables and fruits, whether fresh, frozen or canned.** Add them to dishes your family already loves and use them as healthier sides, snacks and desserts. Avoid salty sauces and sugary syrups.

**Cut back the amount of sodium your kids eat.** When buying packaged foods, compare nutrition labels and choose the product with the least amount of sodium. Or look for the Heart-Check mark on the package to help keep sodium in check.

**Cut back on added sugars in your family's diet.** Sugar-sweetened beverages like soda and sports drinks are the biggest source of added sugars for most of us. Encourage kids to drink more water instead.

**Look for the Heart-Check mark.** It's an easy way to help identify foods that can be part of an overall healthy eating plan. Learn more at [www.heartcheck.org](http://www.heartcheck.org).

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# Trade Shows & Events



We encourage you to promote your participation in the Heart-Check Certification program as much as possible and will provide you with tips that help make that easier.

## Collateral and Giveaways

**Collateral:** Add the Heart-Check mark to any collateral such as flyers or brochures that you hand out at these events.

(NAME OF COMPANY) participates in The American Heart Association®'s Heart-Check Food Certification Program. This certification is based on the American Heart Association's nutrition requirements for heart-healthy food. Look for the Heart-Check mark on these products today: (NAME OF PRODUCT).

**Giveaways:** Check with your Heart-Check representative to see if you can add the Heart-Check logo to your give-a-ways. For the logo type, contact your Business Development Manager.

**Trade Show Booth Design:** Be sure to use the Heart-Check mark in your booth design.

**Signage:** Be sure to reference your Heart-Check Certification.

## Promotion to drive booth attendance and increase impressions

If you and AHA are both at events together, take this opportunity to drive people to each other's booths. Put together a promotion where if they go to both booth's and say "I'd like my heart checked", they can enter to win a prize at each booth. Another way, use the downloadable flyer to stamp at the first booth, then send with that person to the second booth. They can then give the second booth their business card to enter the drawing to win or they get a promotion item. (Note: please be sure to work with your Business Development Manager if you want to set this type of promotion up at an event.)

**A giveaway suggestion for this promotion:** Recyclable Grocery Bag with both logos that say, "I got Heart-Checked".



[heartcheck.org](http://heartcheck.org)

If you have questions or need help, please reach out to your Business Development Manager. We are happy to work with you to promote your Heart-Check certification and to talk with you about any marketing ideas.