

Plant Stanols and Sterols (also known as Phytosterols)

What are plant stanols and sterols?

- Plant stanols and sterols are made from naturally occurring substances in nuts, vegetable oils, corn, rice, and other plant foods.
- They block the absorption of cholesterol and help lower LDL cholesterol levels without affecting HDL cholesterol levels.
- Studies have shown 2-3 grams stanols or sterols lower LDL cholesterol up to 10 to 14%. Most of these studies have been done on spreads containing the ester forms. Many foods are now fortified with stanols and sterols. These include margarine spreads, orange juice, milk, bars, and baked products.
- In order to get the full cholesterol-lowering benefit, include 2-3 grams of sterol equivalents EVERY day. (1 gram stanol or sterol ester is equivalent to 0.6 grams phytosterol).

What are special considerations for using plant stanols and sterols?

- Make sure to consume the correct number of servings needed every day to get 2-3 grams of sterol equivalents total.
- These products may be high in calories. Include the calories as part of your daily intake to prevent weight gain.
- It is best to eat foods supplemented with plant stanol/sterols as part of a meal containing some healthy fat for better absorption.
- Foods can be combined to reach the desired amount. For example, you could have 1 cup of Minute Maid® Premium Heart Wise Orange Juice at breakfast and 1 Tbsp Promise® Activ Spread on vegetables at dinner or 1 Tbsp Smart Balance Heart Right® on oatmeal at breakfast and 2 Benecol® chews with dinner to reach the amount needed.

- Try the stanol/sterol products for 6-12 weeks every day as a part of your cholesterol- lowering diet. If your cholesterol levels are improving, continue including them daily.

What about supplements?

- There are many plant stanol/sterol supplements on the market.
- They are easy to take with you but may be expensive. Consider having the supplements as a backup for when you cannot reach the 2-3 grams from food sources, for example, when on vacation or when dining out.
- If you do take the supplements, make sure to take the correct amount to reach 2-3 grams a day.
- The supplements should be taken with a meal that includes some healthy fat.

GOAL: 2-3 grams of stanol/sterol equivalents per day.

Product	Calories per Serving	Amount of Phytostanol / sterols	Stanol/ Sterol Equivalent	How or Where to get product
Promise® Activ Light Spread	45 calories 1 Tbsp	1.7 grams sterol esters	1 gram	Meijer Kroger
Kardea® Nutrition Bars *contain 5 grams of soluble fiber	150 calories 1 bar	1 gram sterol	1 gram	http://shop.kardeanutrition.com -password MGoBlue for discount; Plum Market; Atrium Healthy Heart Café at UM Cardiovascular Ctr

Smart Balance® Heart Right™	45 calories 1 Tbsp	1.7 grams sterol esters	1 gram	Kroger
Minute Maid® Premium Heart Wise Juice	110 calories 1 cup	1 gram sterols	1 gram	Meijer
Silk® Heart Health Soy Milk	80 calories 1 cup	0.65 grams sterols	0.65 grams	Whole Foods
Benecol® Light Regular	50 calories 70 calories 1 Tbsp	0.85 grams stanol esters	0.5 grams	Meijer Kroger Busch's
Benecol® Smart Chews	20 calories 1 chew	0.85 grams sterols	0.5 grams	drugstore.com Amazon.com Benecol.com
Nature Made Cholest Off®	2 capsules	0.9 gram sterols/sta nols	0.9 grams	Major pharmacies and grocery stores

Other foods with a small amount of plant sterols (less than 0.5 mg per serving) include:

Kroger Active Lifestyle® milk, VitaTops® Dark Chocolate Pomegranate Muffin Tops, Rice Dream® Rice Drink, Krusteaz® Healthy Start Frozen Breakfast items: waffles, pancakes, French Toast; Lifetime® low fat cheese.

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