SPICY TURKEY SAUSAGE AND KALE CHILI

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S., accounting for roughly 25 percent of all deaths in America. Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that 11.3 percent of the adult population (aged 18 and older) in America is diagnosed with heart disease.

Studies show that the development of heart disease begins in youth. In fact, the fatty streaks of atherosclerosis (plague build-up/blockage in the heart's blood vessels) have been seen in youth as young as 15 years old. Although not all deaths from heart disease are preventable, the large majority are.

Lifestyle choices play a key role in determining your risk of developing and/or dying from heart disease. Being physically active, getting enough sleep, abstaining from tobacco products and making heart healthy food choices are all key habits that help to lower your risk. Adequate consumption of fruits and vegetables may also improve how you manage stressful situations, such as tight deadlines or chronic stressors, such as the loss of a job.

This can help you work better under pressure and be more resilient to whatever life throws your way. Fruits and vegetables also have compounds in them that keep bones strong to help you physically perform optimally.

Use the following tips to help build a nutritious, heart-healthy eating pattern for you and your family:

- Cook most of year meals at home and choose wisely while eating out.

- Eat plenty of high-fiber foods, like fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, and nuts. Aim for at least 8 servings of fruits vegetables per day (fresh, frozen, or canned).

- Eat fish, especially oily fish (such as salmon, trout, and mackerel) at least twice a week. Eat other heart healthy fats, found in unsalted nuts and seeds, as snacks, but keep the serving sizes in check.

- Cook with olive, sunflower, safflower, corn and /or soybean oil, but do so in moderation.

- Choose fat-free or low-fat dairy products and mostly whole-grain products. (With a doctor's okay, switch all children over the age of 2 to skim milk.)

- Go lean with protein foods and aim to have at least one meatless meal per week and use plants for your protein source.

- Avoid processed products that contain trans-fats and limit the consumption of products with excess sodium, fat, and added sugar.

- Opt for low-sodium or no salt added when the options are available.

- Choose water as your beverage of choice most of the time.

This chili adds a tasty flavor to the ground turkey but with minimal effort. Even though canned goods are used, the sodium level is kept in check by using low-sodium and no-added-sodium products. The fresh kale adds a surprisingly delightful texture. Consider cornbread as a side dish to round out the flavor.

PER SERVING:

Calories:	393	Fiber:	9.64 g
Protein:	35.45 g	Sodium:	354.93 mg
Fat:	15.35 g	Sat Fat:	3.55 g
Carb:	32.76 g		

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

1 tbsp. olive oil
1 lb. ground turkey, 93% lean, 7% fat
1 - 15.5 oz. can cannellini beans, drained
32 oz. low-sodium chicken stock
1 - 14.5 oz can low-sodium diced tomatoes
1 - 14.5 oz. can stewed tomatoes
2 tbsp. tomato paste
1 bunch kale, stems removed
¼ tsp. cayenne pepper
Salt to taste (optional)

TIP

The longer the kale is cooked the less stiff it will be and will lose it's vibrant green. To thicken the chili, let it simmer for 30 minutes before adding the kale.

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil to medium-high heat. Add the ground turkey. Once browned, drain.

2. Add the chicken stock, tomatoes, beans, cayenne pepper, and tomato paste. Stir until the tomato paste breaks up and is absorbed fully.

3. Tear the kale into pieces and add to the chili. Cook for five minutes and serve.

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