Recipes to fight heart disease

A new cookbook based on a US doctor’s oil-free diet is out. Joan Chew finds out more

A new cookbook offers a range of recipes that keep to the no-oil, whole foods, plant-based diet advocated by retired American cardiologist Dr Dean Ornstein.

The Heart Smart Oil-Free Cookbook contains 47 recipes for drinks, bread-based foods, salads, snacks, vegetables, main dishes and desserts. It is targeted for those who want to steer clear of coronary artery disease and existing patients who want to keep their condition in check.

Dr Esselstyn, a former Olympic gold medalist, wrote a book in 2007, Prevent And Reverse Heart Disease, which influenced former US president Bill Clinton of the United States to give money to his clinic to set up a medical research and education institute. It is called The Clinton Foundation.

Skilled chefs and global nutrition experts whose recipes are featured include India’s chef and TV show host Sanjeev Kapoor, Australia’s food and nutrition consultant Mayura Mohta and the author of the book – Dr Esselstyn.

Dr Esselstyn has shown that his diet, in conjunction with cholesterol-lowering medication, can stop the progression of coronary artery disease. The fat content in Dr Esselstyn’s plant-based diet is in the range of 9 to 12 per cent of the total calories consumed, with none of the fat derived from added oils or animal or dairy products.

The fat content in Dr Esselstyn’s plant-based diet is lower than the total fat intake recommended by the Ministry of Health of 30 per cent of total calories consumed, with none of the fat derived from added oils or animal or dairy products.

Dr Esselstyn’s diet can be adopted by people “if they want to improve their cholesterol levels. Though the diet could be difficult to keep to, the benefits outweigh the difficulties. We do not mention exercise, which has been shown to help the heart.”

The study did not reveal how much patients’ plaque regressed, which would have been useful information. “It isolated a central group, had a ‘huffily small’ sample size and did not mention exercise, which has been proven to help the heart,” he added.

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