

The Facts About Fats

Fat is not all bad!! The fat in food is actually very helpful. Your body needs it to absorb and transport vitamins A, D, E, and K; to provide energy, and to keep your brain and nerves working normally. Your body needs stored fat to maintain body heat, protect vital organs, and build an energy reserve.

Fat helps make foods taste and smell good! Fat also plays a role in satisfying hunger--- giving you a sense of feeling full. However, there is much evidence that a diet high in fat, especially saturated fat, is related to heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and obesity.

Heart disease is much more common in people with diabetes. Certain fats can increase the level of cholesterol in the blood...and the risk for heart disease. Fats found in foods are not all the same. Both the type of fat and the amount of fat eaten contribute to heart disease.

Saturated Fat

Increases harmful LDL cholesterol
Increases total cholesterol
Solid at room temperature

Unsaturated Fat

(Polyunsaturated and Monounsaturated)
Decreases harmful LDL cholesterol
Decreases total cholesterol
Soft or liquid at room temperature

Trans Fat

Increases harmful LDL cholesterol
Increases total cholesterol
Primarily in stick margarine and hydrogenated fats

Cholesterol

Found only in animal foods
Also made in human liver
Limit to 200 mg per day from foods

Sources of Saturated Fat		
Meats	Cheese	Egg Yolk
Whole Milk	2% milk	Ice cream
Butter	Cream cheese	Sour cream
Palm Oil	Coconut Oil	Cocoa butter
Sources of Polyunsaturated Fat		
Safflower oil	Corn oil	Sesame oil
Soybean oil	Sesame seeds	Walnuts
Sources of Monounsaturated Fat		
Canola Oil	Peanut oil	Peanuts
Olive Oil	Olives	Almonds
Flaxseed Oil	Cashews	Avocado
Sources of Trans Fat		
Stick margarine		Lard
Foods made with hydrogenated fat		
Commercially fried foods		
Sources of Cholesterol		
Whole milk	Egg Yolk	Liver
Cheese	Cream cheese	Meat

Fat modified foods

The food industry continues to develop new technology to prepare foods that taste good but are lower in fat. There are many different types of fat replacers used. Many fat free foods use carbohydrate based fat replacers which may not be the best choice for people with diabetes. Be sure to read the food label carefully. Some newer fats on the market include:

Plant stanol or plant sterol esters block the absorption of cholesterol in the stomach before it can build up in the blood. These products may be added to soft spreads such as Benecol or Promise Activ, orange juice and yogurt. Research shows that eating 2-3 servings (2 grams) per day can help lower LDL (bad) cholesterol by 15%.

Olestra is a fat replacer that contains no calories because it passes through the body without being digested and absorbed. It is used in frying and in snack foods. Eating an excessive amount of olestra may cause diarrhea.

Enova oil is a new cooking oil derived from soy and canola oils. It contains the same calories and fat as regular oils but is used differently by the body. When it is digested, less fat is stored by the body. It does not cause diarrhea. Enova oil can be used like any other oil.

Tips for Heart-Healthy Eating

- Bake, broil, roast or grill meats to get the fat away from the meat
- Drain fat from ground beef; take the skin off poultry
- Buy the lowest fat meats and poultry you can afford
- Eat smaller servings of meat
- Use low fat or fat-free dairy products
- Replace ice cream with frozen low fat yogurt or reduced fat ice cream
- Eat more vegetables without added butter or sauces
- Use cooking oil, spray-type oils or soft tub spreads instead of butter
- Limit donuts, pastries, sweet rolls and rich desserts

You Can Do It!

Choose one of these easy ideas or write down one or two things you will do to eat less unhealthy fat and more healthy fat.

- I will switch from whole milk to low fat milk
- I will add less spread to my toast in the morning
- I will eat a smaller portion of meat
- I will remove the skin from chicken
- I will try low fat cheese in place of full fat cheese
- I will _____

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