

Dietary Fats

Where are Dietary Fats Found?

Dietary fats are found in a variety of foods. Dietary fats provide us with energy and some vitamins, so small amounts are essential. However, eating excess fat can lead to weight gain, elevated cholesterol, heart disease and poor diabetes control.

There are different types of fats – some that are healthy and some that are unhealthy.

Type of Fat	Health Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Saturated × Trans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Increase Blood Cholesterol Levels × Increase the Risk of Heart Disease
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Monounsaturated ✓ Polyunsaturated (including Omega 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improve Blood Cholesterol Levels ✓ Reduce the Risk of Heart Disease



Sources of Saturated & Trans Fat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> × Butter, Ghee, Cream × Lard, Dripping, Copha × Coconut Cream & Milk × Palm Kernel Oil × Fat on Meat × Skin on Poultry × Salami & Sausage × Other Processed Meats × Full Fat Dairy × Deep Fried Foods × Pastry, Doughnuts × Cake, Biscuits, Slice × Chocolate

Sources of Polyunsaturated & Omega 3 Fats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sunflower & Safflower Oil & Margarine ✓ Oily Fish ✓ Soybean Oil ✓ Hazelnuts & Brazil Nuts ✓ Walnuts & Linseeds ✓ Omega 3 Enriched Eggs ✓ Plant Seeds

Sources of Monounsaturated Fat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Olive Oil & Olives ✓ Canola Oil & Margarine ✓ Peanut Oil & Peanuts ✓ Avocado ✓ Almonds ✓ Plant Seeds

Reducing Fat Intake

Meat & Poultry

- ✓ buy lean cuts of meat and trim all visible fat before cooking
- ✓ buy skinless poultry / remove skin before cooking
- ✓ limit frequency of processed meats such as salami, sausage, chicken loaf, strass, kabana etc

Dairy Foods

- ✓ choose low fat or skim milk, yoghurt and cheese

Dressings & Condiments

- ✓ replace cream or oil salad dressings with low fat or fat free varieties, lemon juice or vinegar
- ✓ scrape margarine or low fat ricotta thinly on bread instead of butter
- ✓ add pickle, mustard or relish to sandwiches instead of butter, margarine or mayonnaise

Extra Foods & Take Away Foods

- ✓ limit frequency of cake, biscuits, chocolate, crisps, doughnuts, croissants, muffins etc.
- ✓ limit frequency of takeaway foods, especially those deep fried, with pastry, or cooked with extra fat

Cooking Methods

- ✓ grill, dry roast, boil, steam, microwave or barbeque instead of frying in fats and oils
- ✓ consider a spray oil, or use a brush to provide an even coating with a minimum of oil
- ✓ try a variety of mono and poly unsaturated oils to suite your taste buds, budget and recipe
- ✓ avoid adding fats to cooked food, i.e. butter, margarine, meat gravy or cream sauces
- ✓ try using herbs, spices, low fat yoghurt, tomato based sauces, salsa etc. to add flavour
- ✓ try low fat evaporated milk as an alternative to cream in sauces or coconut milk in curries

Label Reading

- ✓ learn to read nutrition labels and select products lower in total, saturated and trans fats

What if I Don't Need to Lose Weight?

Some people with diabetes may be struggling to gain weight or maintain their current weight. In this situation, an increase in foods rich in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat maybe encouraged. However, keeping saturated and trans fat intake low remains important for heart health.

Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute
Level 4, The Alfred Centre, 99 Commercial Road, Melbourne,
Vic 3004 Australia
T (03) 8532 1800 F (03) 8532 1899
W www.bakeridi.edu.au

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