

# Be Well, Stay Well

## The truth about dietary fat

### When we think about a healthy diet, “fat” is usually a bad word.

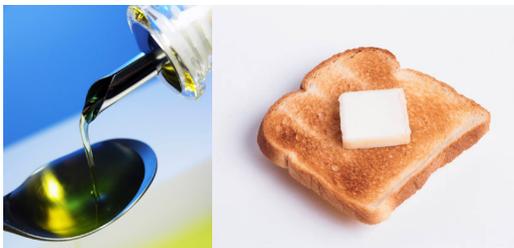
But dietary fat is essential for normal body function. There are just some fats that are better for you than others. Read below to learn more about the different kinds of fat and how to make healthy food choices.

#### Trans fat

Trans fats are found in small amounts in the fatty parts of meat and dairy products. Artificial trans fat comes from foods that contain partially hydrogenated oil, which is added to food to increase its shelf life.

Trans fat increases LDL (“bad” cholesterol) and may also decrease HDL (“good” cholesterol).

To reduce your intake of trans fat, read nutrition labels and choose products with 0 grams trans fat. But be careful! Products with less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving can be labeled as having 0 grams trans fat. To ensure a food truly has 0 grams trans fat, check the ingredient list and avoid foods with hydrogenated oil.



#### Saturated fat

Animal fats, such as high-fat cheeses or cuts of meat are a primary source of saturated fat. Certain plant oils, like coconut oil and cocoa butter, are another source and are often added to commercially prepared foods, such as cookies, cakes and doughnuts.

You should consume less than 10% of your daily calories as saturated fat. To do this, choose leaner cuts of meat and low-fat dairy products, and remove the skin from poultry before cooking.

#### Quick tips

- Reduce your intake of calories from solid fats. Replace solid fats with oils when possible.
- Keep your total trans fat consumption as low as possible. Avoid foods that contain hydrogenated oils.
- Consume less than 10% of calories from saturated fats.
- Eat fewer than 300 mg of dietary cholesterol per day.

#### Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a fatty substance that is found in animal-based foods.

Because saturated fat is also found in animal products, you can reduce your dietary cholesterol intake by following the tips to reduce your saturated fat intake.

Your body’s cholesterol levels are also affected by your genetics. It’s important to eat a healthy diet, but make sure you have your cholesterol checked regularly, especially if you have a family history of high cholesterol.

#### Do you have a chronic condition and want help managing your diet?

Your Disease Management program can help! Start speaking with a registered nurse who can help you control your condition and provide additional education and assistance on nutrition.

You can enroll if you have asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, chronic pain, congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol.

**Call American Health at 1-866-244-8977 to enroll.**

#### Polyunsaturated fats and monounsaturated fats

Most of the fat you eat should come from unsaturated sources. Some examples of these healthy fats include fish, avocado, nuts, flaxseed and many oils (like vegetable oil, olive oil, canola oil, corn oil, and soybean oil).

Keep in mind that any type of fat is high in calories, but you can make a healthier choice by substituting unsaturated fat for saturated and trans fats. Replace solid fats with liquid oils when you’re cooking. Adults should limit their intake of fat to between 20% and 35% of their total calories.