

## **So what's up with Fat?**

You may think of all fat as a devil food and that eating it will do nothing more than make you fat. Well, you would be wrong. People get fat from eating too many calories, not necessarily from what they eat. Fats happen to be an essential food for our health and survival. We cannot live without it. The real problem is that an average American just eats too darn much of it.

### ***So how much fat should you eat?***

It is best is to keep your fat within 15% to 30% of your total calorie intake. Just remember, fat is very calorie dense. Every gram of fat contains nine calories, whereas protein and carbohydrates have just 4 calories per gram. So, when eating fats be careful not to over do it.

### ***Are some fats better than others? Yes.***

You want to limit or avoid saturated fats and trans fats. Saturated fats don't need to be avoided completely; however, you should limit them. Most saturated fats come from animal products. So when you are eating that marbled steak, think about whether or not you want that marbling around your belly. Those white globs of fat may end up clogging arteries and elevating your cholesterol.

Trans fats should be avoided at all cost. They are THE DEVIL fat. When looking at food labels, avoid foods with partially hydrogenated oil – this is trans fat. Don't get it confused with hydrogenated oil, which should be limited like saturated fat, but does not need to be avoided.

### ***Some interesting facts about trans fats:***

- Research has shown a relationship between Trans fats and increased bad cholesterol levels (LDLs), risk of cardiovascular disease, cancers (breast, colon, and prostate), and decreased fertility.
- New York City has banned trans fats from restaurants.
- Trans fat is used in shelved baked goods, margarine, Crisco, etc. Make sure you read the ingredients. If it has partially hydrogenated oil...STAY AWAY!

### ***OK...so what are the good fats?***

Now for the good news! Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats are both healthy and yummy. These are some of the healthiest things for your body. Polyunsaturated fats - found in fish, some vegetable oils, and seafood - contain essential fatty acids (omega-3 and omega-6). Monounsaturated fats are found in various oils including: olive, vegetable, canola, peanut, sunflower, and sesame oils. They are also found in avocado, peanut butter, nuts and seeds. These fats help reduce inflammation and improve your immune system. When I think of inflammation, I usually think of muscular inflammation; however, there is also vascular inflammation. When you decrease vascular inflammation you decrease the plaque in your arteries which helps help to prevent stroke and cardiovascular disease. Both of these fats also help with decreasing cholesterol.

### ***How do I add good fats into my diet?***

I don't know about you, but I love taking in food that makes my body healthier.

The easiest way to incorporate healthy fats in your diet is to replacing the unhealthy fats with healthy ones. For example, instead of buttering your bread, dip it into olive oil. Olive oil has a great flavor and is much healthier than butter. To add more flavor, sprinkle in some basil and garlic...or come up with you own flavor profile!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions!

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