

Focusing on:

Denial: It's Not Just a River In Egypt



Facing The Facts About Fats, Oils, And Sweets

Oils are fats that are liquid at room temperature, like the vegetable oils used in cooking. Foods that are mainly oil include mayonnaise, certain salad dressings, and soft (tub or squeeze) margarine with no trans fats. Check the Nutrition Facts label to find margarines with 0 grams of trans fat. Amounts of trans fat will be required on labels as of 2006. Many products already provide this information.

Solid fats are fats that are solid at room temperature, like butter and shortening. Solid fats come from many animal foods and can be made from vegetable oils through a process called hydrogenation.

All fats and oils are a mixture of saturated fatty acids and unsaturated fatty acids. Solid fats contain more saturated fats and/or trans fats than oils. Oils contain more monounsaturated (MUFA) and polyunsaturated (PUFA) fats. Saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol tend to raise “bad” (LDL) cholesterol levels in the blood, which in turn increases the risk for heart disease. To lower risk for heart disease, cut back on foods containing saturated fats, trans fats, and cholesterol.

Fats, oils, and sugars may possibly be the most challenging aspect to conquer. The average person's goal should be to consume no more than 30% of their total calories from fat and less than

10% of their total calories from saturated fat. This maximum fat intake guideline has been demonstrated for a 1600, 2200, and 2800 calorie diet.

- 30% of 1600 calorie diet = 53 grams of fat
- 30% of 2200 calorie diet = 73 grams of fat
- 30% of 2800 calorie diet = 93 grams of fat

Decreasing Fat From Your Diet

- Use mustard instead of mayonnaise
- Have low fat yogurt instead of ice cream
- Use vegetable spray instead of cooking oil
- Use light or low calorie margarine instead of regular margarine or butter

Remember, moderation is the key! And don't try to cut fat entirely out of your diet. Our bodies need fat for certain functions. Fat is utilized by the body for insulation, brain functions, nerve conduction, and for the absorption of the fat-soluble vitamins.

The Skinny On Fats

Fat is really an umbrella term for a variety of different substances. We get much of our fat from the foods we eat, but our bodies also manufacture some fat. Fat is essential for maintaining our health. However, certain types are better for us than others. There are three main types of fat, based on their chemical structure—saturated, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated fatty acids. Saturated fatty acids come from animal foods like meat, poultry, and full-fat dairy products, as well

as some tropical oils. Consuming large amounts of saturated fat is associated with an increased risk of heart disease, certain cancers, and strokes. The American Heart Association recommends that you consume no more than 20 grams of saturated fat daily. Unsaturated fats are divided into two categories. Monounsaturated fatty acids are found mostly in vegetable oils such as olive, canola, and peanut. Polyunsaturated fatty acids are found in vegetable oils such as safflower, sunflower, and soybean, as well as in nuts and fatty fish.

How Sweet It Is?!

Sugar is sometimes referred to as a simple carbohydrate. These simple carbohydrates contain calories—thus a source of energy—but no nutritional value. One teaspoon of sugar contains 16 calories, which may not seem like a lot, but they do add up.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) advises that adults try to limit themselves to about 10 teaspoons of added sugars per day. To keep in line with this, you'll have to carefully watch what you eat and read food labels. For instance, a typical cup of fruit yogurt provides 70 percent of a day's worth of added sugar; a cup of regular ice cream provides 60 percent, a 12-ounce Pepsi provides 103 percent, and a quarter-cup of pancake syrup provides 103 percent.

While restaurant foods are not required to provide nutrition labeling, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) found that a Cinnabon provides 123 percent of USDA's recommended daily allowance of added sugar, a large McDonald's Shake 120 percent, and a large Mr. Misty Slush at Dairy Queen 280 percent.

Trouble In Paradise

One of the biggest problems with high-sugar foods is that they replace more healthful foods. According to USDA data, people who eat diets high in sugar get less calcium, fiber, folate, vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin E, zinc, magnesium, iron, and other nutrients. They also consume fewer fruits and vegetables. For example, if you're

drinking soda pop instead of low-fat milk or orange juice, or eating a candy bar instead of a piece of fruit, you're missing a chance to cut your risk of osteoporosis, cancer, or heart disease.



This Week's Challenge

Try cutting out as much soda from your diet as you possibly can. Also, switch to the diet alternatives—they have far less calories and sugars.

Five Questions

Here are five questions for you to consider as you progress through this campaign.

1. What are the motivational factors influencing you to stick with the food pyramid?
2. Did your eating habits, especially in regards to fats and sweets, coincide with the New Pyramid before you started this program?
3. What social forces (people, places, and policies) help you to stick with your healthy eating and exercise?
4. What materials and/or resources (e.g., health articles, friends, etc.) would best help you reach your goal?
5. Is your work and home environment a hindrance to becoming and staying a healthy eater? What steps could be taken to improve this?



"Research has shown that if you take action to manage your blood glucose (by making changes in diet and increasing your level of physical activity), you can delay or prevent type 2 diabetes from ever developing."

—AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION