



FAT IS BACK

A lot has changed from the days when fat was the source of all evil. We now know there are “good fats” and “bad fats” and the type you consume may affect your health and other dietary choices.

So, what’s the low down on fat? Fat is necessary for bodily functions such as protecting organs, absorbing nutrients, producing hormones and helping to regulate body temperature. As for adding to meals – it helps our food taste great and keeps us full for longer.

TYPES OF FATS

There are three types of fats: Unsaturated, Saturated and Trans-Fats. Trans-fats are now banned in Canada, which means it is now illegal for manufactures to add artificial trans-fats to their products.

FATS	WHAT DO THEY DO?	FOODS
Monounsaturated	Lower your “bad” (LDL) cholesterol; increase your “good” HDL cholesterol	Olives, avocados, peanuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, oils from these foods
Polyunsaturated	Consists of two types. Omega-3 fats help keep our immune system healthy and may lower the risk of heart disease and stroke. Omega-6 fats help regulate our genes, and promote immune health and blood clotting. Both lower your “bad” (LDL) cholesterol.	Omega-3: Salmon, sardines, walnuts, flaxseeds Omega-6: Safflower oil, sunflower oil, corn oil, margarine*, nuts, salad dressings, snack foods
Saturated	Raises bad cholesterol (LDL) at a high rate, and in small amounts increases good (HDL) cholesterol	Ice cream, yogurt**, milk**, cheese**, butter**, fatty meats, coconut oil, palm oil, hot dogs, burgers, deli meats, doughnuts

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So what's the key? Eat more Unsaturated Fats (monounsaturated, polyunsaturated [Omega-3]) and less Saturated fats.

* WHAT ABOUT MARGARINE?

Margarine sometimes gets a bad reputation because it is often used to contain trans-fat. However, now that trans-fats are banned in Canada, margarine contains unsaturated fats, making it an excellent heart-healthy choice.

** WHAT ABOUT DAIRY AND SATURATED FAT?

Remember, unlike other saturated fats (i.e. doughnuts), dairy provides calcium, protein, vitamin D, magnesium and other vitamins and minerals. Recent research suggests that the fat in dairy may have a positive effect for heart disease and diabetes.

OILS

All oils have some combination of saturated and unsaturated fats. You should choose oils that are higher in unsaturated fat and lower in saturated fat. The following chart demonstrates the percentage of each type of fat in a variety of oils.

