

# Facts About Fat

Fat is a nutrient that is needed by the body in small quantities. It is necessary for the absorption of vitamins A, D, E, K to make hormones, to keep the body warm, and adds cushioning to protect the body from injury. Fat is our body's stored energy. It provides 9 calories per gram and provides more calories than carbohydrates and protein. There are different types of fats, which include: **saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, cholesterol, monounsaturated fats, polyunsaturated fats, and omega 3 fatty acids.**

**Monounsaturated fats** are "good" fats as they help lower total cholesterol. Food sources include olive oil, peanut oil, canola oil, almonds, pecans, peanut butter, avocado, and green and black olives.



**Omega 3 fatty acids** have shown to help lower triglycerides and cholesterol levels and reduce the risk for heart disease. Fish and fish oils such as wild salmon, herring, mackerel, and sardines are the best sources of these fats, as well as flaxseeds, walnuts, and canola oil. The recommended intake is 1-2 grams per day. A 4 oz portion of salmon contains approx 3 g of omega 3 fatty acids.



**Polyunsaturated fats** (omega 6 fatty acids) may also help lower cholesterol levels. Sources include margarine, mayonnaise, walnuts, oils (corn, safflower, and soybean), salad dressing, and pumpkin seeds.

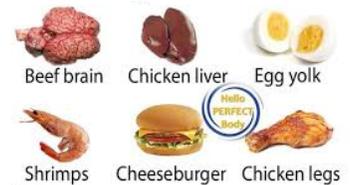


**Saturated fats** may increase cholesterol levels. Foods that contain saturated fat include animal proteins (beef, hotdogs, sausage, bacon, and poultry with skin), high-fat dairy products (whole milk, cheese, butter), lard, cream sauces, palm oil, coconut and coconut oil.



**Cholesterol** is made by the body and is required to make many different hormones. Cholesterol is also obtained from the foods you eat. Intake should be less than 200 mg per day. Sources of cholesterol include high-fat animal proteins, high-fat dairy products, egg yolk, liver and other organ meats, and shellfish.

## Foods High in Cholesterol



**Trans-fat** is a byproduct of the "hydrogenation" of oils. This process makes the fat more solid, saturated, and more resistant to spoiling. Trans-fat raise LDL (bad) cholesterol and lower HDL (good). Avoid foods with trans-fat. Foods high in trans-fat include baked goods, processed snacks (muffins, pastries, cookies, chips, cakes), stick margarines, and shortening.



# Helpful Hints to Reduce Fat Intake

- **Avoid frying:**

This just adds calories and fat to the food; Try other cooking methods such as baking, broiling, grilling, steaming, etc.



- **Choose lean meats:**

The leaner the meat, the less fat and saturated fat it contains; Examples of lean meats include skinless chicken breast, eye round beef cut, and top round beef cut; Each 3 oz portion has less than 2 grams of saturated fat.



- **Portion your meats:**

Make sure to weigh your meats after they have been cooked to avoid eating too much; Keep portions at 3-4 oz at lunch and dinner.



- **Eat fish 2-3 times per week:**

Fish is naturally lower in fat and calories and is an excellent source of protein; The portions may be slightly larger, 5-6 oz at lunch and dinner.



- **Choose low fat dairy**

**products:** They give you the same amount of nutrients (protein, Calcium, Vitamin D) as full-fat dairy products, minus the fat.



- **Avoid sauces and dressings:**

They tend to be high in fat and calories; Ask for sauces and dressings on the side; try putting the sauce/dressing on your fork first then the food -This will help control the amount that you eat.

