

Different Fats: Get the Skinny on Fats

There are all kinds of fat in our foods. Trans fat, hydrogenated fat, partially hydrogenated fat, saturated fat, unsaturated fat, monounsaturated fat, polyunsaturated fat, etc. Learn the difference between these fats to trim the pounds and inches from your body and get healthy.

Trans or Hydrogenated Fats:

- oils treated by a hydrogenation process to be harder at room temperature and increase the shelf life of products that contain them
- snack foods such as cookies, cakes, crackers, chips
- salad dressings, margarine, and other foods made with partially hydrogenated oils or shortening
- raise bad cholesterol (LDL) levels and lowers good cholesterol (HDL) levels

Saturated:

- solid at room temperature
- raise cholesterol levels
- mostly animal foods such as meat, milk, cheese
- tropical oils such as coconut oil, cocoa butter, palm oil, palm kernel oil.
- chicken and fish have less saturated fat than red meat

Unsaturated:

- liquid at room temperature, mostly from a plant source
- lower bad cholesterol (LDL) levels
- Monounsaturated: avocado, nuts, seeds (almonds, hazelnuts, pecans), and canola, olive, and peanut oils

- Polyunsaturated: [omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids](#) from fish such as salmon, herring, sardines, mackerel, trout, and tuna, walnuts and flaxseeds, as well as corn, safflower, flaxseed, sunflower, soybean, and sesame oils

How Fats are Good for You

Fats are crucial for good health as they provide energy and facilitate the absorption of fat-soluble K, D, A, and E vitamins. They also aid in hormone production and cell growth, protect your internal organs and regulate your body temperature. For these reasons, fats should account for 30% of your daily calories.

So, which ones are the best?

Try to eat mostly unsaturated and use saturated fats sparingly, less than 10% of your daily calories. Trans or hydrogenated versions should be avoided as much as possible.

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