

WATCH THE FATS YOU EAT



Fat is an essential nutrient in the diet. We need some fat to function normally, but we need to be mindful of the amount and types of fats that we're eating.

How much fat should I eat?

Fats are an important part of a healthy balanced diet however regardless of the type, they're all high in kilojoules. You shouldn't cut all fat from your diet, but choose your fats wisely and try to choose from the poly and mono unsaturated types.

Your total fat intake should be between 20% and 30% of the energy you eat in a day. This means between 40 and 85 grams of fat per day, depending on your activity level, age, gender and stage of life.

Saturated Fats

Saturated fats are solid at room temperature and found mainly in animal based products including:

- ▲ full-cream dairy products such as milk, yoghurt, cheese and ice-cream
- ▲ butter
- ▲ pastries, biscuits, cakes, pies and chocolate
- ▲ fried take-away foods
- ▲ fat on meat, especially processed meat
- ▲ coconut and palm oil

For health, we should be limiting the saturated fats in our diet as they can raise cholesterol levels and increase risk of cardiovascular disease.

To reduce the saturated fats in your diet, try:

- ▲ skimming the white fat from the top of cooled soups, casseroles and curries
- ▲ trimming the fat from meat
- ▲ choosing reduced fat dairy

Unsaturated Fats

Unsaturated fats lower your cholesterol and provide essential fatty acids that the body can't make itself. They're liquid at room temperature and can be divided into polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats.

Polyunsaturated fats are found in foods such as:

- ▲ oily fish (tuna, salmon, mackerel and canned sardines)
- ▲ tahini (sesame seed spread)
- ▲ margarine
- ▲ linseed (flaxseed), sunflower and safflower oil
- ▲ pine nuts and brazil nuts.

Omega-3 fatty acids belong to this group of good fats. The best source of Omega-3 is oily fish such as tuna, mackerel

and salmon. We recommend that you eat two to three 150 gram serves of oily fish every week. You can cook oily fish at home by grilling, baking or steaming it.

Monounsaturated fats are found in foods such as:

- ▲ avocados
- ▲ almonds, cashews and peanuts
- ▲ cooking oils made from plants or seeds, such as sunflower, canola, soybean, olive, sesame and peanut oils.
- ▲ Margarine

What about Trans Fats

Trans fats are found both naturally and in manufactured products. Naturally occurring trans fats are found in small amounts in dairy products (butter, cheese), beef, veal, lamb and mutton and in its manufactured form, in spreads, cooking fats, deep-fried and baked products such as pies, pastries, sausage rolls and doughnuts. The problem with manufactured trans fats is that they behave like saturated fat and can increase cholesterol levels.

In Australia, it's not law for food companies to label how much trans fats are in their products unless the company is making a claim about the product's fat profile. Which means you may not be able to tell how much trans fats are in the food you're eating.

Consider purchasing fats, oils and products with Heart Foundation Tick which are no more than 1% trans fat through Heart Foundation regulation

How do I read food labels?

When shopping, read food labels and try to choose products which are low in fat. To compare products look at the nutrition information panel on the food packaging. Choose foods that contain less than 3 grams of fat per 100g and fluids that contain less than 1.5g of fat per 100mL.

▲ Compare packaged foods per 100g/mL

		GOOD	OKAY
Total fat	Food	Less than 3g	3 – 10g
	Drinks	Less than 1.5g	1.5 – 5g
Saturated Fat	Food	Less than 1.5g	1.5 – 3g
	Drinks	Less than 0.75g	0.75 – 1.5g
Sugar	Food	Less than 5g	5 – 15 g
	Drinks	Less than 2.5g	2.5 – 7.5g
Sodium (Salt)	Food	Less than 120mg	120 – 400mg
	Drinks	Less than 120mg	120 – 400mg

Also choose foods **high in fibre** (3g or more per serve) for added benefits



© 2010/09

Supported by



Government of Western Australia
Department of Health



livelighter.com.au