

12 Healthy Habits

Habit 5: Good Fats

A YEAR OF BUILDING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

BENEFITS:

- **Essential fatty acids help the body absorb fat-soluble vitamins, keep the skin healthy and help the body make substances that regulate blood pressure and immune response**
- **Lowering saturated fat can lower the risk for heart disease**

GOAL:

- **Limit total fat to no more than 30% of calories and saturated fat to less than 10%**

Adapted from *Cooking Light Magazine*

Balance Your Diet with Healthy Fats

Fat is an essential nutrient that our body needs to function properly. It plays a role in providing energy, keeping skin healthy, absorbing vitamins and regulating blood pressure and our immune response.

But, while we need some fat in our diet, we need to keep it in balance with other nutrients and need to use the right kinds of fats. Fats have more calories than any other nutrient with 9 calories per gram so we need to watch our total fat intake to keep these calories in check. In general, the recommendation is to limit total fat to 30% of calories overall. Some individual foods will have more fat so they need to be balanced with foods that have little or no fat.

We also need to be selective in the kinds of fats we choose. Saturated fats are

those that are generally solid at room temperature and include items like butter, animal fat, dairy fat and coconut milk. Saturated fats, when eaten too often, tend to raise blood cholesterol levels (especially the LDL or “bad” cholesterol) and promote plaque buildup in the arteries. This can lead to heart disease, so try to limit saturated fats to 10 % or less of total calories.

Trans fats also tend to raise cholesterol levels. These are created when liquid oils are turned into solids for processed foods and to make shortening. Look for products with no trans fats on the label and no hydrogenated oils listed on the ingredients.

The trick is to replace these saturated fats with ones that do not promote heart disease. Polyunsatu-

rated fats (think corn oil, soybean oil, safflower oil) and monounsaturated fats (think olive oil and canola oil) tend to reduce cholesterol levels and keep us feeling full and satisfied. To get a good variety of vegetable oils, try purchasing a different kind of oil each time you go to the store—corn oil one time, canola another time and so on. Nuts, seeds, fish and avocados also contain healthy fats, so incorporate them into your diet with moderation while still keeping an eye on total fat. Fats don’t have to be feared, embrace the healthy fats as part of a balanced diet.



Good Fat Swap Outs

Instead of this:	Try this:
Sautéing in butter	Sautéing in olive oil
Toast with butter	Toast with peanut butter
Mayonnaise on a sandwich	Mashed avocado on a sandwich
Well marbled beef ribeye steak	Roasted salmon fillet
Apple cake recipe with shortening	Apple cake recipe with vegetable oil
Crackers and cheese	Nuts

Say Cheese!

While cheese can be a good source of calcium and protein in the diet, it can also be high in fat, ranging from 5—10 grams per ounce. So making smart choices about the cheeses we use on a regular basis is important. For example, choosing an ounce of part-skim, low moisture mozzarella over an ounce of Monterey will save over 2 grams of saturated fat and 3 grams of total fat. You can also reduce the fat by using a strong flavored cheese so you use less. A little bit of Parmesan goes a long way in flavoring foods. So take a look at what cheese you use. Here are some common cheeses listed from lowest to highest saturated fat content per ounce.

Part Skim Mozzarella	3.1	Swiss	5.0
Neufchatel	3.6	Gouda	5.0
Soft Goat Cheese	4.1	Blue	5.3
Feta	4.2	Monterey	5.4
Parmesan	4.7	Cream	5.5
Provolone	4.8	Colby	5.7
Brie	4.9	Cheddar	6.0

Stir Fried Chicken with Cashews

1/2 cup chicken broth
 1/4 cup hoisin sauce
 2 tablespoons soy sauce
 1 teaspoon cornstarch
 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
 1 1/4 pounds chicken breasts, sliced thinly across the grain
 8 ounces sliced mushrooms
 1/4 cup chopped green onion bottoms
 + 2 tablespoons thinly sliced tops
 2 teaspoons minced garlic
 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
 (or to taste)
 1 red bell pepper, julienned
 1/2 cup roasted cashew nuts
 Cooked Rice

In a small bowl whisk together chicken broth, hoisin sauce, soy sauce and cornstarch. In a wok or large sauté pan, heat oil. Add chicken and cook just until it turns opaque, 2-3 minutes. Remove chicken with a slotted spoon to a bowl. Add the mushrooms to the pan and cook until tender. Add the green onion bottoms, garlic, crushed red pepper and red bell pepper. Cook until just tender, about 1 1/2 minutes. Add the chicken and the sauce to the pan and mix well. Bring to a boil and simmer until sauce thickens. Add green onion tops and cashews and serve over hot rice.



Eat
Breakfast

Get
Cooking

Eat
More Fish

Get
Moving

Good
Fats

Go
Meatless

Veggie
Up

Get
Stronger

Sugar
Down

Make
Grains
Whole

Portion
Power

Be
Mindful