

# MYTH: FAT MAKES YOU FAT



## REALITY: NOT ALL FAT IS CREATED EQUAL

Fat has gotten a bad rap in the past decades, but fat doesn't make you fat. We need fat in our diet! Fat is required for many of your body's processes. It helps your body absorb important vitamins and produce important hormones. Adding healthy fats to meals and snacks, also helps to keep us full between meals. Here are some helpful tips on choosing foods that are rich in healthy fat.

- **“Unsaturated”** - Increase your intake of heart healthy, unsaturated fats, also called monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. These healthy fats are found in foods such as nuts and seeds, avocados, fish, olive and canola oils, etc. When cooking, try using heart healthy fats such as olive or canola oil instead of butter or adding a handful of nuts and seeds to a salad or oatmeal.
- **Say “no” to trans-fat** - Trans-fats are often found in processed foods, fried foods, and some frozen foods. They wreak havoc

on your arteries and promote heart disease. Be sure to check nutrition labels for “trans-fats,” and the ingredient **“partially hydrogenated oil”** because this is trans-fat in disguise.

- **“Saturated”** - Limit your intake of foods high in saturated fat, such as whole milk, cheese, processed meats (such as bologna and hot dogs), snack cakes, fast foods, etc. Try to limit your intake of saturated fat to around 10 grams per day. Focusing on eating more fruits and vegetables is a great way to help reduce the amount of saturated fat in your diet.
- **Go lean** - Choosing leaner cuts of meat such as skinless chicken breasts, turkey, and fish, is a great way to reduce your intake of saturated fat. Choosing less marbled cuts of meat, removing the skin, and trimming away visible fat are also great ways to avoid excess saturated fat.

**INCLUSION TIPS:** Individuals with disabilities are three times more likely to develop heart disease and diabetes. These conditions can develop or progress if your diet does not meet your nutritional needs; therefore, it is important to fill your plate

with proper nutrition including healthy fats.

[nchpad.org/906/5028/What-is-Heart-Healthy-Eating-](http://nchpad.org/906/5028/What-is-Heart-Healthy-Eating-)  
[nchpad.org/1366/6185/Nutrition-Information-Breakdown](http://nchpad.org/1366/6185/Nutrition-Information-Breakdown)

**FAMILY MATTERS:** Make meal preparation a family affair. From making the shopping list to preparing the foods, meal preparation can be a great way to spend time together. Also,

getting kids involved in the kitchen early on will help teach them basic cooking skills that they can build on, rather than relying on processed and fast food as they get older.

## LINKS:

**Dietary Fats:** [heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/fats/dietary-fats](http://heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/fats/dietary-fats)

**Types of Fats:** [hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/fats-and-cholesterol/types-of-fat/](http://hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/fats-and-cholesterol/types-of-fat/)

**Swapping Butter:** [delishably.com/dairy/Substitutes-for-Butter-in-Baking](http://delishably.com/dairy/Substitutes-for-Butter-in-Baking)

**Healthy Recipe:** Black Bean Burrito: [snap4ct.org/black-bean-burrito.html](http://snap4ct.org/black-bean-burrito.html)