

Saturated/Unsaturated Dietary Fat



Daily Value=

less than

65

grams*

of total fat

unsaturated fat

*
based on a
2,000-calorie
daily diet

saturated fat

less than

20

grams*

of saturated fat

What Is Fat?

Fat is an essential nutrient and important source of energy for the body. However, the type of fat makes a difference to heart health. The total amount of fat consumed is also important. It is recommended that 20–35% of your daily calories come from fat—with most fat coming from unsaturated fat sources.

Saturated fat comes from animal products, including meat, butter, cheese, and milk; it is also found in coconut and palm oil.

Polyunsaturated fat is found in corn, safflower, sunflower, and soybean oils as well as in nuts, seeds, fish, and shellfish.

Monounsaturated fat is found in olive, canola, and peanut oils as well as in olives and avocados.

Trans fat can be found in processed foods, especially french fries, doughnuts, vegetable shortening, stick margarine, chips, popcorn, cookies, crackers, and other foods that contain partially hydrogenated vegetable oils.

Fat and Our Health

Too much **saturated fat** can raise levels of LDL cholesterol, sometimes called “bad” cholesterol, which forms deposits on the walls of your arteries and may cause serious health problems.

Both **polyunsaturated fat** and **monounsaturated fat** can help reduce total blood cholesterol if used in place of saturated fat. Unsaturated fats may also help to reduce your LDL cholesterol level.

Trans fat raises levels of LDL cholesterol and may even lower the amount of HDL cholesterol, sometimes called “good” cholesterol. Keep trans fat consumption as low as possible because of its negative impact on health.

Daily fat needs and consumption

A person’s total fat intake should account for 20–35% of his or her total calorie intake. Saturated fat should constitute less than 10% of your total calorie intake. A 2,000-calorie diet should have less than 65 grams of total fat and 20 grams of saturated fat.

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