

The Skinny on Trans Fats

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Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 1.5g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%

Fat is fat, right? Or is it? Fat comes in several forms, saturated, monounsaturated, polyunsaturated, and trans. The monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are actually healthy fats found in fish, nuts, olive oils, and canola oils. These fats can contribute to “good” cholesterol and reduce the risk of heart disease. Saturated and trans fats, however, are not healthy and should be limited in the diet. Trans fats are physically similar to saturated fats, but they are different in their chemical structures. Trans fats are formed in food through hydrogenation, a process that turns oils into solids at room temperature.

Why should trans fat be a concern for you? Trans fats increase the “bad” cholesterol, or LDL cholesterol in the body. An increase of LDL cholesterol increases the risk of heart disease by forming plaques in arteries.

Where are trans fats? Trans fats are found naturally in small amounts in animal foods and are found in high amounts in fried foods and processed foods such as granola bars, pastries, chips, and crackers. Some Nutrition Fact Labels already include trans fat content, but by January 2006, it will be required for all food labels to include trans fat information.

Knowledge is power. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in this country. By limiting both saturated and trans fats consumers can enjoy the benefits of good health.

Take action with these ideas:

- ✓ Limit fried foods and processed treats
- ✓ Opt for oils or trans fat-free margarines
- ✓ Eat natural peanut butters made with oils rather than hydrogenated fats
- ✓ Make cookies with raisins or toasted nuts rather than chocolate chips