



Do You Know About Fats?

You probably already know that it's best to avoid too much fat. But did you know that your body actually needs some fat to stay healthy? There are also different kinds of fat that are healthier than others. It's actually quite complicated, but here are the basics...

Fat is what's called an "organic compound", and it's made of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen. There are four types of fat: saturated, unsaturated, trans, and hydrogenated. Unsaturated fats are largely considered the healthiest fats...but you still need to watch how much you consume because all fats contain a lot of calories.

Your body needs fat to store extra calories in the body as a source of energy when food is not available. Fat also provides energy in the form of calories, and helps the body absorb Vitamins A, D, E and K through your blood.

Despite the needs your body has for fat, you need to be aware of what too much can do to you. Eating large amounts of saturated fat increases your chances of getting heart disease, raises your cholesterol and can cause obesity. Polyunsaturated fat (one of two kinds of unsaturated fats – the other is called monounsaturated fat) can increase your risk for cancer if eaten in large amounts.

As you can see, fat is something you need to watch closely. Not getting any fat will cause your body to function improperly, but if you eat too much fat it can make you sick.



What are the best foods to eat to get the right amount of fat?

- Skinless chicken
- Lean meat
- Fat-Free or 1% dairy products
- Fish
- Soy

If you closely watch how much fat you consume – and what kinds of fat you are eating – you will be well on your way to living a healthy lifestyle!

What foods should be limited or avoided?

- Limit or avoid fried food
- Limit or avoid processed food
- Limit egg yolks
- Limit cheese and other "whole" dairy products
- Avoid or limit foods with saturated fat (see nutrition labels)
- Avoid foods with hydrogenated and partially-hydrogenated fats (see nutrition labels)
- Avoid trans-fat (see nutrition labels)