

Lifestyle Lessons

Personal risk management tips provided by:
Marshall & Sterling, Inc.



Say No to Foods Containing Trans Fat!

Trans fat, the worst type of fat for your body, is vegetable fat that has been chemically altered by way of hydrogenation. This process turns healthy fat, such as corn or soy bean oil, into solid, unhealthy fat. The effects of consuming food containing trans fat is linked with increased LDL ("bad cholesterol") levels, decreased HDL ("good cholesterol") levels and increased triglyceride levels. These effects can increase your risk of developing heart disease and insulin resistance.

Just Say No!

Since trans fat can lead your health down a risky path, it's wise to avoid consuming foods containing this type of fat and saturated fat. To do so, opt for reduced-fat or fat-free varieties of your favorite foods, but only if high fructose corn syrup, partially hydrogenated oils or other unhealthy ingredients have not been added in place of unhealthy fat.

Also, when looking at food labels, remember that the ingredients are listed from greatest to smallest amounts, so look out for foods that place high fructose corn syrup and partially hydrogenated oils as one of the first few ingredients.



Healthy Hints

Three grams of trans fat per day doubles your risk of heart disease, so try to avoid foods containing this unhealthy form of fat when possible.

Where Are Trans Fats Hidden?

Here are the top 10 most likely places where you will find trans fat:

- Margarine: Select brands with no hydrogenated oil and the least amount of both trans and saturated fat. If you prefer butter, use very small amounts of a whipped or mixed with canola oil variety.
- Packaged foods such as cake or pancake mixes: Bake homemade goodies so you do not consume the added fat.
- Soup: Avoid dried and canned liquid soups.
- Fast foods: Anything that is deep-fried contains a lot of trans and saturated fats. Opt for a grilled version of your favorite foods.
- Frozen foods: Read food labels on already-prepared frozen items, even if they claim to be low fat. They may still contain trans fat.
- Baked goods: Bake your own donuts, cookies and muffins instead of eating ready-made options.
- Candy: Instead of chocolate, choose jellybeans or licorice.
- Potato chips and crackers: Select baked or whole grain varieties and have popcorn instead of pretzels.
- Breakfast foods: Choose whole grain versions of oatmeal, cereal and breakfast bars, and read the label to check for bad fats.
- Toppings, dips and condiments: Use oil, vinegar and low-fat milk creamers and avoid salad dressing, gravy, mayonnaise, whipped topping, non-dairy creamers and hot fudge.

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