

Choosing Healthy Fats

By Stephanie Pradun, RD, LDN, TRIO Registered Dietitian

It was once believed that a healthy diet should have as little fat as possible, but we now know that not all fats are created equal. The truth is, some fats are helpful. “Healthy” fats promote better heart health, brain health, and reduce inflammation.

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Fats Healthy fats include polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats. The polyunsaturated fat category includes omega-3 fatty acids, which help lower cholesterol and promote brain and heart health. Monounsaturated fats help increase the “good” HDL cholesterol in the body and decrease inflammation. Unhealthy fats are saturated and trans fats (or trans fatty acids). Sources of saturated fats are high-fat animal products, including beef, poultry with skin, butter, cheese, and ice cream. Trans fats are found in fried and processed foods, such as pastries, cookies, and fries.

Know the Source According to the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, a general goal is for 20 percent to 35 percent of your total daily calories to come from healthy fats, and fewer than 10 percent of calories per day from saturated fats. The American Heart Association suggests an even lower saturated fat intake, around 5 to 6 percent of calories per day, for heart health. Be sure to check the nutrition facts label when shopping to make a healthy choice. Emphasize foods with poly- and monounsaturated fats and look for ways to incorporate them into each meal. Try adding chia or flaxseed to your oatmeal to start your day. At lunch, add sliced avocado to a sandwich or sprinkle a few walnuts on your salad. Choose fish for dinner more frequently, especially fatty fish like salmon or tuna. Replace butter or cooking oil with a small amount of olive oil for added benefit.

Sources: <https://www.eatright.org/food/nutrition/dietary-guidelines-and-myplate/choose-healthy-fats>

<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/fats>

Oregon Cascades West

Dining Centers & Days of Service Call for Lunch Reservations

Our menus include a variety of foods to provide you with well-balanced meals, which are lower in fat and sodium and offer the choice of a diabetic friendly dessert.

LINN COUNTY

Albany Senior Center

Monday-Friday (541) 967-7647

Brownsville Christian Church

Tues & Thurs (541) 466-5015

Lebanon Senior Center

Monday-Friday (541) 451-1139

Mill City, First Presbyterian

Tues & Thurs (503) 897-2204

Sweet Home Community Center

Mon., Tues., Fri (541) 367-8843

BENTON COUNTY

Corvallis Senior Center

Monday-Friday (541) 223-1005

LINCOLN COUNTY

Lincoln City Community Center

Mon., Wed., Fri (541) 994-7731

Newport Senior Center

Mon., Wed., Fri (541) 574-0669

Siletz, Tribal Community Center

Mon & Wed (541) 270-6853

Toledo, Trinity United Methodist

Friday (541) 270-7416

Waldport, South County SR. CTR

Mon., Wed., Fri (541) 563-8796