

GO Fats and SLOW Fats

Why is fat an important part of our diet?

Fat is an excellent source of energy for our bodies. Fat gives us energy, helps us feel full, helps us absorb vitamins and minerals, and it keeps our skin and nerves healthy. We all need some fat in our bodies, but we need to be careful about what kind of fat we eat. Fat acts like a cushion and helps protect our stomach, liver, intestines and other body organs. This month, your student learned how to identify which types of fats foods contain.



Saturated fat is found in animal and plant products, is solid at room temperature, and is generally considered a bad-for-your-heart SLOW Fat. Saturated fat is in butter, cheese, lard, steak, chicken, and smaller amounts in some plant products including oils and nuts. The amount of saturated fat varies so check the nutrition label.

Unsaturated fat is found in plant products and fish, is usually liquid at room temperature, and is a good for your heart GO Fat. Olive oil, avocados, nuts, seeds and fish contain unsaturated fat.

What is trans fat? During the food manufacturing process, unsaturated fats are sometimes changed into trans fats to keep the food from spoiling quickly. Trans fats are also called partially hydrogenated fats. These SLOW Fats are bad for your heart and if consumed in large amounts can contribute to type 2 diabetes. Some brands of margarine, shortening, and some grocery products such as cookies, crackers and peanut butter contain trans fats.

To know if a food contains trans fat, make sure to read the ingredient list. Watch out for words like partially hydrogenated in the ingredient list.

INGREDIENT LIST: LIQUID SOYBEAN OIL, **PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED SOYBEAN OIL**, WATER, BUTTERMILK, CONTAINS LESS THAN 2% OF SALT, SOY LECITHIN, SODIUM BENZOATE (PRESERVATIVE), VEGETABLE MONO AND DIGLYCERIDES, ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR, VITAMIN A PALMITATE, COLORED WITH BETA CAROTENE (PROVITAMIN A).

Here's a GO food with heart healthy fats that you can make with your child.

Tuna Bites

1 can of tuna
¼ cup hummus
¼ cup shredded carrots
¼ cup corn (frozen, defrosted)
Whole wheat crackers or pitas



Mix tuna, hummus, carrots and corn. Serve with whole wheat crackers, pita, bread or over a bed of lettuce.