



The Be Fit Minute

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THE SKINNY ON UNFIT FAT

Fat is not the enemy of a healthy diet, but consuming too much unhealthy fat (saturated and trans fats) can put your heart and blood vessels at risk. Learn where to look for the unhealthy fat that may be lurking in your diet.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR ON LABELS:

- **Avoid products with “partially hydrogenated oils”** in the ingredients list. This means the product has trans fat, which not only raises your bad cholesterol, but lowers your good cholesterol, and can damage blood vessels.
- **“Fully hydrogenated fats”** have replaced partially hydrogenated oils in many products and are trans fat free, but their long-term effects haven’t been extensively researched. **Your best bet:** stay away from foods that you can’t explain what the ingredient is.
- **Look for foods with 2 grams or less of saturated fat per serving.** Try to limit your total saturated fat to 20 grams or less per day (12-15 grams if you have high cholesterol).

SNEAKY SATURATED FAT SOURCES

CHEESE

1 ounce of cheese (about the size of 4 dice) consumes about 1/3 of your allotment of saturated fat for the day.



Are there cheeses that are lower in saturated fat?

Not by much. Brie, cheddar, and blue cheese all have about 6 grams of saturated fat per ounce. Mozzarella, goat, and feta cheese have about 4 grams per ounce, while part-skim mozzarella and reduced-fat feta have 3 grams per ounce.

Instead: If you tend to overindulge on cheese, have a small handful of nuts (about 10-15 nuts) for a snack instead. Or substitute hummus for the cheese and pair it with crackers or veggies. Both nuts and hummus have hearty-healthy fats and contain fiber.

COFFEE

Be mindful of your morning routine: an extra large coffee with cream can contain about 10 grams of saturated fat. Change to a medium coffee (14-16 ounces) and you’ll cut your saturated fat in half. Or switch to milk and reduce your intake by 1/3.

Beware of: Specialty coffee drinks: a medium iced mocha made with whole milk and topped whipped cream has 10-15 grams (50-75%) of your saturated fat for the day. Your best bet is to stick to the smallest size available and limit how frequently you select high fat dairy options (half and half, whole milk, and whipped toppings).



CHOCOLATE

While dark chocolate has antioxidants and flavanols (beneficial plant chemicals) that may offer health benefits, it also has saturated fat (about 8 grams per ounce), so be mindful of how much chocolate you have “for your health.”

Beware of: Protein bars covered in chocolate: most contain 3-5 grams of saturated fat per bar (about as much as a Snickers bar), so if you’d like to increase your protein intake, your best bet is to turn to healthier snacks, like yogurt or soy nuts.

ICE CREAM

You scream, I scream, we all scream when we see the saturated fat content of ice cream. 1 cup (about 2 scoops) of ice cream has about 20 grams saturated fat (100% of your daily allotment). Most of us eat at least 1 cup when we indulge.

Should you switch to another frozen dessert?

1 cup of sherbet has much less saturated fat (4 grams per cup) and fewer calories, but it also has more sugar (6 teaspoons more). Sorbet is typically fat free, but also tends to have more sugar. Gelato frequently contains less butterfat than ice cream, so it has slightly less saturated fat, and frozen yogurt is often “fat free,” but watch out for candy and cookie toppings.

Instead: Eat what you enjoy, but watch the portion size and how frequently you indulge. Aim for 1/2 cup (the size of a baseball).



BEEF

It may be “what’s for dinner,” but be aware of where you are eating it. Steakhouse portions are often supersized and can range from 6-20 ounces: even a lean cut, like beef tenderloin, will provide 50% of your saturated fat allotment if you eat 8 ounces. If you plan to splurge on a 15-ounce rib eye, be ready to consume over 200% of your recommended saturated fat for the day.

Instead: When opting for beef, remember that the recommended protein portion is 3-4 ounces (the size of a deck of cards).



BREAKFAST PASTRY

It likely comes as no surprise that donuts are high in unhealthy fat, but get a blueberry scone, coffee cake, or plain croissant from a coffee shop and you might as well be eating a donut: these options all have about 10 grams or more of saturated fat.

Instead: Make an English muffin with peanut butter before you leave the house. Or stash a box of bars made with fruit and nuts (try Kashi, LÄRABARA, or Kind bars) at work, instead of grabbing breakfast on-the-go.