

# Avocados and Other Healthy Fats

September 15, 2022



## Concepts Taught

- Why fats are needed;
- Different types of fats and their effects on the heart and body;
- How to choose and use tasty, healthy fats.

## Why do we need fat?

- **Absorb vitamins:** A, D, E and K
- **increase satiety:** that feeling of being full and satisfied so you don't eat more than you need
- **Reduce the glycemic impact:** of a meal or snack so your blood sugar doesn't spike
- **Provide body with energy:** calories

## How much fat do we need?

- **Total:** About 60 - 70 TOTAL grams per day for a 2000 calories/day diet
- **Saturated Fat:** Less than 20 grams per day
- **Note:** The < 20 g saturated fat per day is part of the 60 g of fat TOTAL per day, not in addition to.

### A day's worth of healthy fat

- A sprinkle of ground flax or chia seeds in a smoothie in the morning
- A few small handfuls of nuts as a snack
- ½ an avocado on a sandwich
- 3 to 4 ounces of wild salmon in the evening

## Key Take Aways

### Different types of fats

- **Unsaturated Fats:** Mostly liquid at room temperature, often plant based. Found in vegetable oils, fish and nuts.
  - Improves heart health and cholesterol
  - May reduces blood clotting and irregular heart beats
  - May slightly lower blood pressure
- **Saturated Fats:** Mostly solid at room temperature. Sat fats are found in animal products such as butter, lard, full-fat milk and yogurt, full-fat cheese, high-fat meat; and tropical oils such as palm and coconut oil.
  - Hard on the heart and arteries
- **Trans Fats:** Avoid trans fats altogether, which raise LDL, fats in your body that raise cholesterol
  - If a package says "partially hydrogenated" oil, it contains trans fats
  - These are often found in processed foods, including bakery, snack foods and fast foods.

## Choose and use healthy fats

- **Cook with**
  - extra virgin olive oil, avocado oil, Canola oil, and other plant-based oils
- **Limit**
  - Desserts and baked goods, cakes, cookies, donuts, pastries, and croissants
  - Most cheeses and foods containing cheese, whole milk and full-fat dairy foods
  - Sausages, hot dogs, bacon, and ribs
  - Fried potatoes (French fries) - if fried in a saturated fat or hydrogenated oil
  - Regular ground beef (85% lean) and cuts of meat with visible fat, fried chicken, chicken skin
  - butter and coconut oil
- **Choose more**
  - Nuts, seeds, and nut butters
  - Low-fat dairy or plant based products
  - Avocado and hummus
  - Fish