



Trans Fats

What are trans fats?

Trans fats are a type of man-made fat. They are formed when vegetable oils are changed from a liquid to a solid. This process is called hydrogenation and is used:

- to keep processed foods fresher longer
- so fats can be reused more often in deep-frying
- to improve the flavour and texture of some foods such as baked goods

Small amounts of trans fats are also found naturally in foods such as high fat dairy products, beef and lamb.

How do trans fats affect heart health?

Trans fats are unhealthy fats. They change your cholesterol levels and increase your risk of heart disease by:

- increasing the amount of LDL or “bad” cholesterol in your blood. This causes the arteries to become blocked over time.
- decreasing the amount of HDL or “good” cholesterol in the blood. HDL helps to protect against heart disease

Trans fats can change your blood cholesterol levels and increase your risk for heart disease.

How are man-made trans fats different from natural trans fats?

There is a link between man-made trans fats and risk of heart disease. The natural trans fats in foods are different than man-made ones, and act differently in the body. Natural trans fats are not thought to be as harmful.

How are trans fats different than saturated fats?

Saturated fats are also unhealthy fats in our diets that cause your arteries to become blocked over time. Both trans fats and saturated fats increase the LDL or “bad” cholesterol in your blood. Trans fats take it one step further though, and also lower your HDL or “good” cholesterol. This makes them worse for you than the saturated fat in your diet.

It is important to limit your intake of both saturated and trans fats for heart health.

How many trans fats are OK?

The less trans fats you have – the better. There is no known safe level of trans fats, so try to limit your intake or avoid them when you can.

How can I limit my intake of trans fats?

Here are some tips to limit your intake of trans fats:

Most of the trans fats in our diets are from processed or fried foods and baked products **made with partially hydrogenated vegetable oils or vegetable shortening.**

- ✓ Avoid or limit your intake of these foods:
 - margarines and shortenings made with partially hydrogenated oils
 - packaged, processed or ready prepared foods such as crackers, tortilla wraps
 - fast foods such as deep fried chicken or french fries
 - frozen prepared foods such as meat pies, hamburgers and quiche
 - baked goods such as cookies, cakes, pastries, donuts
 - snack foods such as regular microwave popcorn or potato chips
 - breakfast foods like frozen waffles, muffins or cereal bars
 - chocolates or chocolate bars
 - cream cheese or nacho cheese dips and whipped cream toppings
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- ✓ Choose a soft margarine that is non-hydrogenated
- ✓ Eat foods that **do not** have trans fats such as:
 - fruits and vegetables
 - chicken, turkey and fish that are baked or grilled, without crumbs or batter
 - legumes such as kidney beans, chick peas or lentils
 - whole grain breads, cereals, rice and pasta
 - nuts and seeds
 - fat free or low fat dairy products
- ✓ Read the **Nutrition Facts** table to find out how much trans fats is in the product. Most major food companies will have trans fats listed in the Nutrition Facts table. Also look for how much saturated fat is in the product.

Trans fats may also be called "trans" or "trans fatty acids."

Nutrition Facts	
Per ½ cup (125 mL)	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 110	
Fat 3.0 g	5%
Saturated 2 g + Trans 0.1 g	11%
Cholesterol 10 mg	
Sodium 40 mg	2%
Carbohydrate 20 g	7%
Fibre 0 g	0%
Sugar 16 g	
Proteins 1 g	
Vitamin A	2%
Vitamin C	0%
Calcium	4%
Iron	0%

Amount of food in one serving.
The serving size is the amount most often eaten.
This may or may not be the serving size you would have.

Amount of trans fat and saturated fat in one serving.

What if the Nutrition Facts table does not list trans fats?

Smaller food companies have until December 2007 to list the amount of trans fats on their label.

If you do not see trans fats on the label, you can tell if there are trans fats in the food product by looking for these terms on the ingredient list:

- partially hydrogenated oil
- hydrogenated
- shortening

What does “Trans fat-free” mean on a package?

For a product to list “trans fat-free” on the package, there must be less than 0.2 grams of trans fat per serving size. The product must also be low in saturated fats. “Trans fat-free” does not mean the same thing as “fat-free”. Products that are “trans fat-free” may still contain saturated and polyunsaturated fats.