



DECREASING FAT AND CHOLESTEROL IN YOUR CHILD'S DIET

Why?

Why should you trim the amount of fat in the food your child eats? Why switch to a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet? The answer is simple: Lowering dietary fat can lower your child's risk of having heart disease including having a heart attack later in life.

The connection between fat in the diet and heart disease is cholesterol—a fat-like substance produced by the liver and found in many animal products. Too much cholesterol is a cause of heart disease because it can block the arteries that deliver blood to the heart.

A family history of heart disease, a diet high in saturated fat and cholesterol, smoking, lack of exercise, and obesity can all contribute to your child's risk of hardening of the arteries. Beware: Saturated fats are converted to cholesterol and may raise blood cholesterol level as much as or even more than products containing cholesterol. Your child may feel fine, even with a high cholesterol level or other risk factors. In fact, for many people a heart attack is the first sign of trouble.

Fortunately, many Americans can lower their blood cholesterol to an acceptable level by changing their diets. By following a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet, you can help control your child's blood cholesterol and reduce his/her risk of heart disease.

A seven-year, government-sponsored study showed that the risk of heart disease falls 2% for every 1% elevated blood cholesterol is lowered.

Where do I begin?

The first step toward healthier eating is to study the American Heart Association's low-fat, low-cholesterol diet and, if necessary, modify your child's eating habits. This diet can help your child maintain or achieve desirable body weight. On this diet, approximately 10% of your child's total calories should come from saturated fat, 10% from monounsaturated fat, and 10% from polyunsaturated fat. The following discussion will help you learn more about fat:

Cholesterol: Cholesterol is a fat-like substance found **only** in animal products. Because dietary cholesterol raises blood cholesterol, intake must be limited. The American Heart Association recommends an intake of no more than 300 mg/day. Examples of high-cholesterol foods: egg yolks, liver and other organ meats.

Saturated fats: These fats are usually solid at room temperature. Although they are most commonly found in animal products, saturated fats also occur naturally in coconut, avocado, and cocoa butter. Vegetable oils that have been converted to solid fats such as margarine contain significant amounts of saturated fats. It is important to read food labels carefully. Although a label may correctly say “no cholesterol,” the product may contain a high level of saturated fat. Examples of foods high in saturated fat: prime cuts of beef, lamb, pork, veal, luncheon meats (bologna, salami), poultry skin, lard, butter, whole milk, chocolate, coconut, coconut oil, palm oil, and hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated vegetable shortening.

Monounsaturated Fats: These fats are usually liquid at room temperature and are found primarily in vegetable products. Current research indicates that monounsaturated fats have a favorable effect on blood cholesterol levels when eaten in moderation. Examples of foods high in monounsaturated fat: olive oil and peanut oil.

Polyunsaturated Fats: These fats are found primarily in vegetable products and are usually liquid at room temperature. When eaten in moderation, polyunsaturated fats have a cholesterol-lowering effect. Examples of foods high in polyunsaturated fat: safflower, sunflower, corn, soybean, and cottonseed oils and margarines made from liquid vegetable oils.

Trans Fats: These fats are found in foods that have been deep fried such as French fries, doughnuts and potato chips. Vegetable oils that have been hydrogenated (the chemical process that is utilized to convert liquid oils to a solid form such as in margarine.) and most brand name peanut butters contain trans fats. Trans fats have been shown to increase total cholesterol levels.

Train yourself to think “low fat” in your food selections and cooking methods. Serve more poultry and fish and less red meat. Serve less fried food, “fast food”, and commercially baked goods. Bake, broil, and steam your food, and be sure to skim the fat off gravies and soups. Add flavor with herbs and spices, and learn to enjoy healthy, wholesome fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

Organize your shopping around low-fat, low-cholesterol menus. Advance preparation and careful shopping can help you avoid foods that are high in fat.

Prepare your palate for wholesome eating in the years to come. A low-fat, low-cholesterol diet is a lifetime plan for healthy eating and healthy living.

CHECKING YOUR DIET

Meat and Protein Foods

CHOOSE	LIMIT
Fish and shellfish	Large servings of shrimp
Chicken and turkey without skin	Fried chicken, duck
Ground turkey-only 15% fat	Fatty ground meat
Lean, well-trimmed beef, veal, lamb	Prime, heavily marbled cuts
Small servings of meat, seafood, and poultry- 7 oz. or less per day	Bacon, sausage, high-fat deli meats
Meatless protein occasionally- dried beans, lentils, split peas, peanut butter, tofu-instead of meat protein	Liver, organ meats
Only two egg yolks per week (including those used in baked products and mixed dishes)	

Milk, cheese and dairy products

CHOOSE	LIMIT
Skim or 1% low fat milk only	Any milk containing more than 1% fat (whole, 2%)
Low fat milk, evaporated skim milk, or nonfat dry milk powder in place of cream	Cream, half and half, nondairy creamers
Frozen yogurt, ice milk, or nonfat dry milk powder in place of cream	Ice cream, whipped cream, non-dairy whipped toppings
Low fat or nonfat yogurt	Whole milk yogurt, sour cream
Low fat cheeses, 1% cottage cheese, skim milk ricotta, skim milk mozzarella, skim American cheese products	Whole milk cheeses- Cheddar, American, Swiss, Muenster, Cream cheese, Brie

Breads and cereals

CHOOSE	LIMIT
Whole grain breads, English muffins, bagels	Cakes, cookies, doughnuts, pies
Whole grain pastas	Fried rice
Whole grain tortillas	Granola
Brown rice	Potato chips
Low sugar cereals (less than 10 grams of sugar per serving)	High fat corn chips
	Cheese crackers

SHOPPING

Use nutrition labels to learn how many of a food's Calories come from fat. Protein and carbohydrates (sugars and starches) both have only four Calories per gram. Fat contains approximately nine Calories per gram. That's why high-fat foods are also high-Calorie foods. Multiply the number of grams of fat by nine to find the amount of fat Calories in the food. If more than about 1/3 of the Calories come from fat, it is a high-fat food and should be used sparingly, if at all. For instance:

Use the ingredient list on food labels to identify products containing saturated fat. Ingredients which contain saturated fat have many names. Some to avoid are:

- Palm oil
- Coconut oil
- Lard
- Beef tallow
- Hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated vegetable shortening
- Butter
- Cream
- Cocoa butter

Some labels do not specify what kind of fat is used. They may say "Contains vegetable oil" without saying what kind of oil, or they may say "Contains one or more of the following oils: Corn, cottonseed, palm, coconut". Be aware that the product is as likely to contain a saturated

fat (such as palm oil) as unsaturated corn or soybean oil. Avoid products that don't list their exact ingredients.

Examine any product claims closely. Some products have "no cholesterol", but their labels show that they do contain vegetable fat. Read the ingredient label to be sure you get the whole story.

CUTTING FAT FROM YOUR DIET IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK

Most people are afraid that following a low-fat diet means totally changing all their eating habits all at once. But the key to success is making gradual changes you can live with. Start by keeping a food diary. Record everything you eat for three or four days. Begin by making a few simple changes. Here are some ideas to get you started:

FOOD	TOTAL CALORIES	FAT CALORIES
Instead of: High fat beef (prime rib), 3 oz.	346	270
Try: Lean beef (round steak), 3 oz.	162	45
Instead of: Fried chicken, ½ breast	218	81
Try: Broiled chicken. ½ breast	142	27
Instead of: Microwave popcorn, 1 cup	60	36
Try: Plain popcorn (air popped), 1 cup	30	--
Instead of: Potato chips, 1 oz.	114	72
Try: Unsalted pretzels, 1 oz.	110	--
Instead of: Butter pecan ice cream, ½ cup	160	90
Try: Butter almond ice milk, ½ cup	100	18