

Family Living Focus

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Mmm! The taste of butter in pastry is a special treat that some have given up, while using margarine or shortening that is more healthy. Right?

Doubts have come up about the wisdom of the switch, though, as a recent commentary criticized the trans fatty acids present in hydrogenated fats, such as margarine and shortening.

Trans fatty acids are formed when liquid vegetable oils, like soybean and corn oils are processed to become solid at room temperature. In this process, called hydrogenation, hydrogen is added to the chemical structure of the oil. Unsaturated oils are turned into more saturated fat, and, with a subtle difference in the chemical makeup some trans fatty acids. Fats that are naturally hard at room temperature have *cis* not *trans* fatty acids.

To reduce heart disease among Americans, the Dietary Guidelines by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommend eating less saturated fat. Partially hydrogenated margarines, containing less saturated fat than butter, became widely used by consumers. Also the food industry used partially hydrogenated oils to reduce the saturated fat content of baked and fried foods, e.g. cookies, crackers, and chips, and to cut cost. Now partially hydrogenated vegetable

fats (margarine included) are themselves under attack for potentially causing heart disease, because of the trans fatty acids they contain. Studies found that trans fatty acids act more like saturated fat in raising blood cholesterol, and they may even lower the HDL or "good" cholesterol.

A commentary by Walter Willett, M.D., Ph.D., in the American

Journal of Public Health in May called for federal regulations to greatly reduce or eliminate partially hydrogenated vegetable fats in the nation's food supply and to include trans fatty acids on the food label.

The estimation of 30,000 annual deaths from heart disease that Dr. Willett and his co-author suggested as the toll of trans fatty acids was based on epidemiological studies. Although not relied upon to prove that a disease is caused by a particular factor, epidemiological studies have gained importance by showing greater risks associated with certain factors, such as fat in the diet.

How do you make food choices now? The first point to remember is to eat less fat. Using butter instead of margarine is an option. One teaspoon of butter contributes 2.5 grams of saturated fat to the

day's total. A healthy adult woman eating 2000 calories daily could eat 20 grams of saturated fat in a day and not exceed one-third of 30% calories from fat, the limit recommended by the American Heart Association for saturated fat intake. An active adult male eating 2500 calories could eat 25 grams and not exceed one-third of 30% calories from fat. What one needs to remember is that the 2.5 grams from one teaspoon of butter are added to the saturated fat from meats, cheese, baked goods, and milk containing butterfat that are eaten in a day's time. Some health advocates think the fat amount you eat should be even lower. Look at the sample of a day's menu to see how the food fats add up for lower fat meals.

Eating less of fat-containing foods and choosing fat-reduced or nonfat foods more often will help to cut down on the trans fatty acids and saturated fats that could cause harm. Using oil like olive oil, canola, peanut, or soybean oil instead of margarine or shortening will help to reduce the saturated fat, but they count as fats, and a diet low in total fat is important too. Eating bread and vegetables without butter or margarine and enjoying their natural flavors alone can be another alternative on the way to maintaining health. But when I bake an occasional cherry pie, I'll use butter.

Following is a list of programs to help you better understand nutrition. All will be held at the Farm and Home Center of the Lancaster Extension.

Facts about Fat and Food Labels: Information about different kinds of fat in food and how to use the new food labels to shop more healthfully. Instructor: Althea Engle. **FREE.**

October 5 9:30-10:30 a.m.
October 27 7:30- 8:30 p.m.

Low-fat Desserts: For special occasions and everyday meals or snacks, desserts can be made that are lower in fat and have eye and taste appeal. Samples are included: Instructor: Althea Engle. **Cost: \$3.**

November 3 7:00- 8:30 p.m.
November 9 9:30-11:00 a.m.

Fruits and Vegetables: How to Cook and Use the Winter Squashes and Autumn Vegetables and Fruits. Instructor: Althea Engle. **Cost: \$2.50.**

October 26 9:30-11:00 a.m.
November 1 7:00- 8:30 p.m.

To register: Call the Lancaster County office of Penn State Cooperative Extension. (717) 394-6851.

A Day's Menu within the Guidelines for Fat and Saturated Fat

	Calories	Saturated fat, g	Fat, g
Breakfast			
Orange Juice, 6 oz.	82	0	0
Corn Flakes, 1 oz.	110	0	0
Milk, 1%, 1 cup	100	1.6	3
Toast, 1 slice	65	0.2	1
Butter, 1 tsp.	33	2.5	4
Coffee, 1 cup	5	0	0
Lunch			
Lean roast beef, 3 oz.	155	2	6
Hard Roll, 1 large	145	0.4	2
Salad Dressing, 1 tsp.	20	0.2	2
Potato salad, 1/2 cup	180	1.8	11
Applesauce, 1/2 cup	97	0	0
Oatmeal cookie, 2 medium	123	1.3*	5
Snack			
Banana, 1 medium	105	0	0
Nonfat yogurt, 1/2 cup	62	0	0
Dinner			
Baked chicken, 2 drumsticks, without skin	150	1.4	4.0
Rice, 1/2 cup	112	0	0
Butter, 1/2 tsp.	17	1.2	2
Tossed Salad, 1 cup	5	0	0
Italian salad dressing, 1 tsp.	80	1.3	9
Bread, 1 slice	65	0.2	1
Butter, 1 tsp.	33	2.5	4
Corn, 1/2 cup	165	0	0.5
Tapioca pudding, with 2% milk, 1/2 cup	133	1.2	2
	2025	17.7	56

(24% calories from fat)

* Amount depends on type of fat used in preparation.
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture



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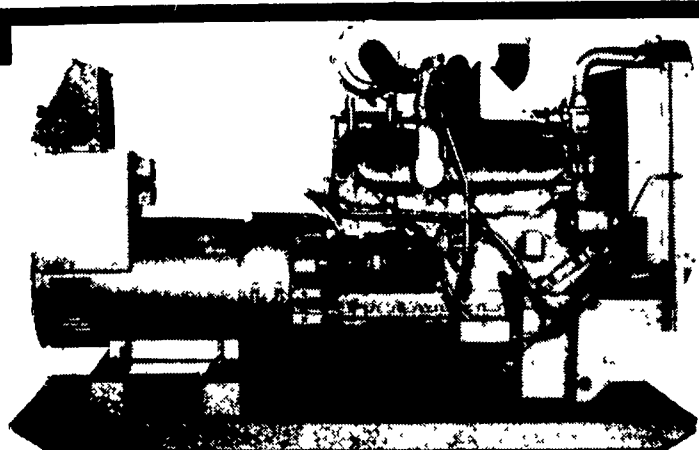
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