EAT MORE FAT : Part 6: The Buyer's Guide for Fat including Cooking Safely with Fats

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This post is part of a six part series on fat. Please be sure to check out the other posts in this series. *Click to return to Part 1 with links to the other posts in the series.*

Part 1: Fat is Essential for Your Heart and Your Health

Part 2: Heart Disease is NOT the Result of Fat Consumption

Part 3: What are SFA, MUFA, PUFA, and Omega 3 & 6 Fats?

Part 4: How to Avoid Unhealthy BAD Fats

Part 5: How to Balance Your Fat Intake for Optimum Health

Part 6: The Buyer's Guide for Fat including Cooking Safely with Fats

This is the final post in the six part series on fats. In this post I'll show you what to look for when buying fats to insure you get good quality, healthy fats and oils. In addition, whether you're consuming them directly or using them for cooking, I'll explain how you to properly store and use the fats and oils.

You may have noticed I use the term “fats and oils”. Oils are just fat in a liquid state. Different fats are liquid at different temperatures. Lard and coconut oil, examples of saturated fats, are solid at room temperature. Olive oil and nut oils, examples of monounsaturated fats, are liquid at room temperature. Vegetable oils and fish oils, examples of polyunsaturated fats, are always liquid.

In Part 4 of the series, “How to Avoid Unhealthy BAD Fats ”, I explained which fats not to buy. Remember that all fats are really a combination of saturated, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated fats but vary in their percentage of each. The identification of a food within one of the three types just means it has a higher percentage of that type of fatty acid. Here is your guide to buying the best quality fats and oils

Fats and Oils Buying Guide

SATURATED FATS

· **Best Sources**

o **Butter** *from grass-fed cows*

o **Coconut Oil** *extra virgin*

o **Palm Oil**

o **Animal Fats***from free-range, grass-fed, and organic*

§ **Full Fat Dairy**

§ **Lard, Tallow & Suet**

§ **Chicken, Duck, Goose, & Turkey Fat**

§ **Eggs & Meat**

§ **Seafood** *wild-caught*

MONOUNSATURATED FATS

· **Best Sources**

o **Olive Oil** *extra virgin, cold-pressed or expeller- pressed, in a dark glass bottle*

o **Avocados** *organic*

o **Almonds, Pecans, Cashews, Peanuts** *raw, soaked and sprouted*

o **Fish** *wild-caught*

o **Dark Chocolate** *80%-100% cacao*

POLYUNSATURATED FATS

· **Best Sources**

- **Fatty fish (salmon, tuna, mackerel, herring, trout, sardines)** *wild-caught*
- **Sunflower, Flax, and Pumpkin seeds** *raw, soaked and sprouted*
- **Walnuts** *raw, soaked and sprouted*

Labeling and Packaging Caveats – Avoid These

- Refined, Hydrogenated, Partially-Hydrogenated
  - These are damaged oils. Never eat these
- USDA Organic
  - this is the lowest level of organic production, only buy this if there are no other “certified organic” options
- Do not confuse cold-pressed with “cold processed”
  - High heat damages polyunsaturates. Cold-pressed and expeller-pressed are methods of extracting oils using less heat. Cold-processed does not indicate how the oil was extracted.
- Only buy oils in a dark bottle
  - polyunsaturates are easily damaged by light
- “Natural” and “Healthy” on the label
  - Foods labeled Natural and/or Healthy are allowed to have pesticides, GMO’s, preservatives and can be manufactured with processes that damage the food
- Health Claims on the label
  - There is no regulation on claims such as “promotes heart health”, “may reduce risk of cancer”, etc.
- Grass Fed
  - Under the USDA definition “grass-fed” animals can also be fed grain, and can be raised on grass in confinement, as long as they have access to pasture. An open door the animal never uses qualifies as access. It’s imperative

to know your farmer.

- Free Range

  - Again, according to the USDA this just means the animal has some access to outdoors. An open door the animal never uses qualifies as access. It's imperative to know your farmer. "Pasture-raised" is a more meaningful term concerning the animal's welfare.

Safely Cooking with Fats and Oils

The rules are pretty simple here. All monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are damaged by heat and light. Even olive oil, which is often recommended for low heat cooking, is damaged by heat and should NOT be used for cooking. Cooking includes all forms of cooking; frying, sautéing, baking, broiling, etc.

- Only cook with fats from the saturated list

  - **Butter** *from grass-fed cows*
  - **Coconut Oil** *extra virgin*
  - **Palm Oil**
  - **Animal Fats**

- Only use monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats for cold uses

- Keep MUFA and PUFA in tightly sealed dark bottles

  - This reduces oxidation and light damage

- Keep MUFA and PUFA refrigerated when not in use

- This reduces heat damage
- Keep fish oil supplements refrigerated
- Olive oil will thicken when refrigerated but will quickly turn to oil at room temperature

I hope you've enjoyed this series on fats. It's a big topic but one that is crucial to understand if you want to optimize your health!

Photo 1 - Image courtesy Grant Cochrane - FreeDigitalPhotos.net