

# Dietary Fat

## Diabetes & Healthier Fat Choices



Dietary fat is a hot topic and research has shown that some types of fat are beneficial.

## Comparing Dietary Fats

### Unsaturated Fat - Choose

- Helps reduce risk of heart attack and stroke by lowering the level of "bad" cholesterol in the body while maintaining the protective level of "good" cholesterol
- Includes polyunsaturated & monounsaturated fat
- Found mainly in plant sources such as olive & canola oil, non-hydrogenated margarine, avocado, seeds & nuts, fatty fish

### Saturated Fat - Limit

- May increase risk of heart attack and stroke by raising the level of "bad" cholesterol in the body
- Found mainly in animal products - fatty meat, higher fat dairy products, butter
- Plant sources include - palm kernel oil, coconut oil

### Trans Fat - Avoid

- May increase risk of heart attack and stroke by raising the level of "bad" cholesterol in the body as well as lowering the level of "good" cholesterol
- Found in hydrogenated margarine, commercially prepared baked goods, many snack foods and convenience items, and foods made with partially hydrogenated oils/vegetable oil shortening

## Dietary fats and your health

Fat is needed by your body for many important functions. A balanced diet includes sources of healthy types of fat.

Fats and oils are calorie dense.

**Watch portions to prevent unwanted weight gain.**

## What is the role of fat in diabetes?

Those with diabetes have a higher risk of heart disease and stroke. You can reduce your risk by managing your blood sugar, blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels. Reducing your intake of saturated and trans fat, and increasing your intake of healthy unsaturated fats, will reduce your risk.

## What is the Mediterranean Diet?

This pattern of eating has been shown to have many health benefits including reducing heart disease risk, lowering blood pressure, improving blood cholesterol levels and blood sugar.

- Choose mostly plant based foods (fruits/vegetables, legumes, nuts)
- Use olive oil when preparing meals
- Use herbs & spices instead of salt to flavor foods
- Choose at least 2 servings of fish per week including fatty fish such as salmon, mackerel, and trout
- Choose poultry more often than red and processed meats
- Choose meals with legumes such as chickpeas, lentils and dried beans several times per week
- Choose lower-fat milk and alternatives (look for 2% milk fat (M.F.) or less)
- If you drink wine, do so in moderation (check with your doctor first)
- Limit sweets
- Enjoy small portions of nuts or seeds several times per week
- Enjoy vegetables at meals and snacks

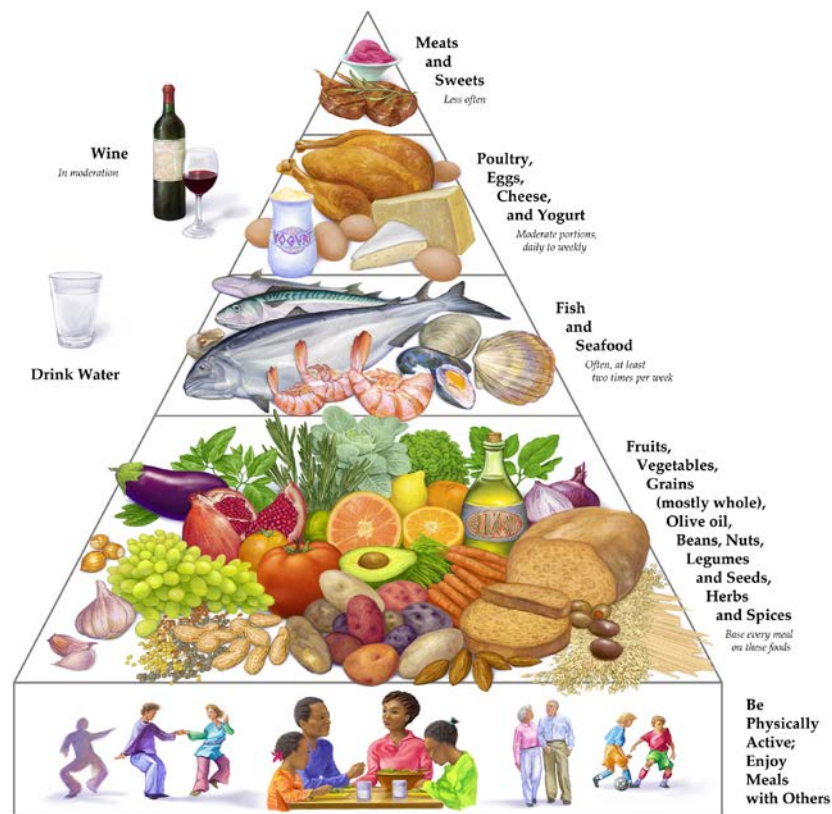
## How much fat should I eat?

Have a small amount of *unsaturated* fat each day. This includes oil used for cooking, salad dressings, non-hydrogenated margarine, and mayonnaise.

Look at the percent Daily Value (% DV) on the Nutrition Facts Table. Aim for foods that are low in saturated fat and with zero trans fat.

### Mediterranean Diet Pyramid

*A contemporary approach to delicious, healthy eating*



Illustrations by George Middleton

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For more information on the **Mediterranean Diet** visit:

<http://www.onpen.ca/docviewer.aspx?id=12650>