



# Choose Healthy Fats

By: Alive

In a 2004 survey by the US Food and Drug Administration, researchers found most people were quite confused about the different types of fat. We explain it all for you here.

Fats	Health effects	Found in
Trans fats	increase LDL cholesterol; decrease HDL cholesterol; increase risk of type 2 diabetes, obesity, certain types of cancers, and coronary heart disease; avoid	packaged and processed foods such as crackers, cookies, doughnuts, and chips
Saturated fats	may contribute to higher LDL cholesterol, a risk factor for heart attack and stroke; consume only in moderation	animal sources: meat, poultry, butter, and cheese
Monounsaturated fats	lower LDL cholesterol, ease inflammation, and benefit other health systems; consume moderate amounts	
Polyunsaturated fats (including essential fatty acids)	cut risk of coronary heart disease; consume moderate amounts	vegetable oils (olive, peanut, sesame) and macadamia nuts, almonds, and avocado

## The omegas

### Omega-3

Omega-3 fatty acids are a type of polyunsaturated fat, which, unlike saturated fats, are liquid at room temperature and remain liquid when refrigerated or frozen. Termed essential, the body requires omega-3 fatty acids for normal development, but they are only acquired by ingestion.

The three most nutritionally important omega-3 fatty acids are alpha-linolenic acid (found in flaxseeds, walnuts, hempseeds, soybeans, and some dark green leafy vegetables); eicosapentaenoic acid, or EPA; and docosahexaenoic acid, or DHA (both EPA and DHA are found in cold-water fish including salmon, tuna, halibut, and herring).

### Omega-5

Although little is known about omega-5, or punicic acid, its potential anticancer effects on breast cancer cells will offer even more insight into the tremendous benefits of essential fatty acids.

### Omega-6

Omega-6 fats are found in borage and hemp oil. High amounts of omega-6 in the diet, however, can have negative effects, and close evaluation suggests that North

Americans consume excessive amounts in the form of corn, safflower, and cottonseed oil found in processed foods.

To counter the potentially harmful effects of excess omega-6 fatty acids in the diet, a balanced ratio of 4 to 1, omega-3 to omega-6 is recommended. Incorporating an omega-3 supplement into the diet can help achieve an ideal balance.

#### Omega-7

Also referred to as palmitoleic acid, omega-7 is another lesser known essential fatty acid found in sea buckthorn oil, which seems to be particularly helpful in lubricating membranes, offering relief to dry eyes, and may also have anticarcinogenic properties.

#### Omega-9

Not deemed essential, as they can be manufactured from unsaturated fat by the human body, omega-9 fatty acids are a component in animal fat and vegetable oil. Interestingly, under essential fatty acid deprivation, the body will elongate omega-9 fatty acid to make mead acid, which has been associated with breast cancer.