

Eat Healthy Fats

Choose healthy fats to improve your health



Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™:

1. Read "Eat Healthy Fats."
2. Create a plan to eat more healthy fats (avocado, fish, nuts, seeds, whole grains).
3. Track your progress in case your organization requires documentation.



16%

**LOWER
CARDIOVASCULAR RISK**
Linked to 2+ servings of
avocado a week.

Hungry for avocados? You've got options: Guacamole. Avocado toast. Even avocado ice cream.

Every October, thousands of people head to Carpinteria, California, to celebrate all of it at the California Avocado Festival, and sample this favorite healthy fat.

There's live music, a guacamole contest judged on taste and presentation, and a "Strong Arm" competition where contestants see who can hold a bag of avocados the longest. 2026 marks the festival's 40th year.

You don't have to

fly to the coast to get in on the benefits. Avocados are a source of monounsaturated fat, also found in olive oil and nuts. Fish provides another type of healthy fat.

Unlike the saturated fat in butter or bacon, monounsaturated fat can help lower your bad cholesterol and support your heart.

That's a big deal, since heart disease is still the leading cause of death for both men and women in the U.S.

So the next time you smash one onto toast or scoop it into guacamole, know that you're doing more than following a trend. You're giving your heart something it actually needs.

Take the month-long Health Challenge to Eat Healthy Fats.

FATS ►





Cholesterol Levels & Your Diet

The type of fats you eat can have a big impact on cholesterol levels

Having high cholesterol puts you at risk for heart disease and stroke. Both are leading causes of death in the United States that claim the lives of about 857,000 people a year.¹

 **Total cholesterol.** An estimated 94 million adults in the U.S. have total cholesterol levels higher than normal.²

 **Only 1 out of 3** adults with high cholesterol has the condition under control.

 **There are no symptoms.** Many with high cholesterol don't even know it.

FATS ►



Fat Facts Quiz

How much do you know about healthy fats? Take the quiz to find out.

T | F

1. ☐ ☐ Most fruits and vegetables contain some healthy fats.
2. ☐ ☐ Olive oil and olive oil spread are not healthier options than butter.
3. ☐ ☐ Saturated fats and trans fats can raise cholesterol levels and increase the risk for a heart attack or stroke.
4. ☐ ☐ Some major sources of unhealthy fats for many people are red meat, pizza and milk.
5. ☐ ☐ Eating plant-based foods is the best way to add more healthy fats to your diet.



Check your answers. How did you do? Olive oil and olive oil spread are healthier options than butter.

Eating more whole, plant-based foods and healthy fats can help lower bad cholesterol levels, increase good cholesterol levels and prevent disease.



Answers: 1. True. 2. True. 3. False. 4. True. 5. True.

Choose Healthy Fats



Eating a lot of foods high in saturated fat can raise LDL (bad) cholesterol.

When Should You Get Your Cholesterol Checked?

A simple blood test is the only way to know your numbers

Since high cholesterol has no symptoms, a blood test is the only way to know where you stand.

Most healthy adults should get their cholesterol checked every 4 to 6 years.

You may need testing more often if you have:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- A family history of high cholesterol

Your results will include the four numbers on this page. Not sure when you were last tested? Ask your doctor at your next visit.

FATS ►



4 Test Results for CHOLESTEROL

A cholesterol blood test gives you these four results:³

1 Total cholesterol A measure of all the cholesterol in your blood.	HEALTHY LEVEL 125 to 200 mg/dL
2 LDL (bad) cholesterol Main source of cholesterol buildup in the arteries.	HEALTHY LEVEL Less than 100 mg/dL
3 HDL (good) cholesterol Helps remove cholesterol from your arteries.	HEALTHY LEVEL 40 mg/dL or higher
4 Triglycerides The most common type of fat in your body.	HEALTHY LEVEL Less than 150 mg/dL



Choose Healthy Fats

5 Types of Fatty Foods to Avoid or Limit



StayWell
INSURANCE



Look beyond the low-fat label

Walk down the aisles at the grocery store and you're bound to see dozens of product packages labeled "low-fat."

Don't be fooled. In most cases, the label just means the item is low in saturated or trans fat, and not a good source of healthy or unsaturated fat.

Here are 5 types of fatty foods to avoid or limit:

1. Meats:

Beef, lamb, pork, sausage, bacon, hamburgers, hot dogs, steak



2. Full-fat dairy:

Whole milk, cream, butter, ice cream, cheese



3. Animal and solid fats:

Lard, vegetable shortening, hard-stick margarine



4. Baked goods using solid fats:

Pie crust, cake, cookies, pastry, doughnuts, crackers.

5. Coconut or palm oil:



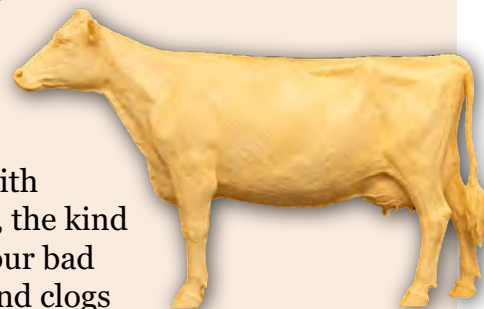
Non-dairy toppings and creamers

Holy Cow: That's a lot of saturated fat

Every year, close to 100,000 people flock to the Iowa State Fair to see a life-size cow sculpted entirely out of 600 pounds of butter.

It's an impressive sight, but that much butter is solid at room temperature for a reason.

It's packed with saturated fat, the kind that raises your bad cholesterol and clogs your arteries.



Here's an easy way to tell if a fat is healthy:

Fats that are solid at room temperature, like butter and lard, are often high in saturated fat. Check the label to know for sure.

FATS ►

Choose Healthy Fats

Add These 9 Healthy-Fat Foods to Your Diet

Fortunately, not all fat is bad. Healthy fats, or unsaturated fats, found in plant-based foods, protect your heart and brain, and help lower the risk for heart disease, stroke and other chronic diseases.⁴

Hungry for better health? Add these healthy fats to your diet:

More Healthy-Fat Resources

✓ Infographic: 7 tips to control cholesterol

<https://tinyurl.com/438yy3uk>

✓ Fats and cholesterol

<https://tinyurl.com/2p92tjd6>

✓ Cut down on saturated fats

<https://tinyurl.com/bdzkprtd>



1

Olive & plant oils



2

Cold-water fish



3

Avocados & olives



4

Nuts & seeds



5

Healthy dressings



6

Beans & legumes



7

Plant-based spreads



8

Soft-tub margarine



9

Veggies & fruit



Plant-Based Power to Control Cholesterol

Choosing foods with less trans fats and saturated fats will help lower your blood cholesterol levels and protect your health.

Plant-based foods like tofu, avocado, soy products, and legumes (peas, beans, lentils, etc.), are cholesterol-free, low in saturated fat, and actually lower cholesterol because of their healthy fat and fiber content.

Vegetables, nuts and seeds, and whole-grain breads and cereals are good sources of healthy fats too. Eat more healthy fats, and you'll be healthier, feel better, and live longer.



References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). Leading causes of death. From: <https://tinyurl.com/4mjcwphc>
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- National Library of Medicine. (2020). Cholesterol levels: What you need to know. From: <https://tinyurl.com/3me2wez7>
- American Heart Association. (2026). 2026 Dietary Guidance to Improve Cardiovascular Health. From: <https://tinyurl.com/2rpdxf4c>

Choose Healthy Fats

Eat Healthy Fats

Choose healthy fats to protect your health

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, or add to your digital calendar).
2. Review your efforts to eat more healthy fats (avocado, fish, nuts, seeds, whole grains).
3. Use the calendar to record your actions and choices to eat healthy fats.
4. Review your progress at the end of each day, week, and at the end of the month. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	NOTES
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_____ Number of days this month I ate healthy fats
 _____ Number of days this month I exercised 30 minutes.

Other wellness projects completed this month:

NAME _____ **DATE** _____