

Tips for Low-fat Cooking

- Use low-fat cooking methods: broil, steam, roast, bake, microwave, grill, braise, boil, simmer, poach, stir-fry. These methods are low-fat only if you don't add fat while cooking.
- Limit high-fat cooking methods such as frying, sautéing, basting with fat, and cooking in fatty sauces and gravies.
- Use herbs, spices, marinades, salsa, flavored vinegars, and fat-free salad dressing, rather than butter, margarine, or oil to add flavor to foods.
- Chill soups and stews and skim off the fat before serving.
- Drain and rinse cooked ground beef under hot water before adding it to spaghetti sauce, tacos, or similar recipes.
- Use ground round for recipes such as meatloaf and meatballs where it is difficult to drain excess fat.
- Use jams and preserves which are naturally fat-free on toast and bagels instead of butter, margarine, or cream cheese.
- Use low-fat or fat-free salad dressings. Measure the amount you use or dip the forks tines in dressing to get just a taste.

Tips for Low-fat Dining

- Whenever possible, choose restaurants that offer a variety of selections. A broader menu will make it easier to choose low-fat items.
- Ask how foods are prepared. Ask for items to be prepared without butter or margarine and have any sauces and salad dressing served on the side so you can control the amount used.
- Check the menu for those items that are baked, broiled, grilled, steamed, poached, boiled, or stir-fried.
- Ask for the chef's recommendation for a low-fat dish.
- When your choices are limited, use your knife and fork to trim calories. Cut fats from meats, remove skin from poultry, and peel off deep-fried batters. Push gravy, rich sauces, toppings and dressing aside.
- Don't add extra fat to your food. Skip the butter on your bread or potato and ask for salad dressing on the side.
- Watch out for large portion sizes. If the portion you receive is too large, cut it in half and take the rest home for another meal.
- Steer away from items described as "buttery," "creamy," "fried," "with cheese," "breaded," "scalloped," "sautéed," "Alfredo," or "au gratin," etc.
- If you want dessert, eat only half or split it with someone. Better yet, order fresh fruit, sorbet, or sherbet.

Some Better Choices

Instead of:

Bacon
Fried Chicken

Ice cream

Chocolate cake

Whole milk

Croissant

Fettuccini with
cream sauce

Fried shrimp with
tartar sauce

Bologna

Beef tacos

Potato chips

Pepperoni pizza

Cream soup

French fries

T-bone steak

Ground beef

Salad dressing/
mayonnaise

Whole eggs

Choose:

Ham or Canadian bacon
Baked chicken without
skin

Non-fat or low-fat frozen
yogurt

Angel food cake

Fat-free or 1% milk

Bagel

Spaghetti with marinara
sauce

Boiled or grilled shrimp
with cocktail sauce

Ham or turkey

Soft chicken tacos

Pretzels

Cheese pizza with veggies
(light on the cheese)

Bean or broth-based soup

Oven-baked fries or a
baked potato

Roast beef

Ground round or extra-
lean ground beef

Low-fat or fat-free
versions

Egg substitutes or egg
whites



**AN APPLE
A DAY**

Eating a Low-Fat Diet

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Eating a Low-Fat Diet

Scientific research has linked eating a diet high in fat with increased risk for heart disease, some cancers, and other health problems. Since fat contains twice as many calories by weight as carbohydrate or protein, a high fat diet is usually high in calories and can increase the risk of becoming overweight and obese.

Is there a low-fat diet I can follow?

The key to a healthy, low-fat diet is to eat a variety of foods from all the food groups with the majority of the foods we eat coming from the Grain, Vegetable, and Fruit groups.

While there are many books available on low-fat eating, the MyPyramid plan on www.MyPyramid.gov website can help you choose foods in the right amounts for you. Within each food group, MyPyramid shows you which foods are lowest in fat and provides recommendations on the number of portions you should eat. You can also use the MyPyramid Tracker, an online dietary and physical activity assessment tool, to assess your diet quality, physical activity status, access related nutrition messages, and link to nutrient and physical activity information.

Do I need fat in my diet?

Yes. You need fat for energy, for carrying fat-soluble vitamins, and to provide the essential fatty acids that your body can't make.

Fat stays in your stomach longer than carbohydrate or protein and helps you feel satisfied after you've eaten a meal. It also enhances the flavor, texture, and smell of some foods.

However, eating too much fat can increase your risk for heart disease, obesity, and certain types of cancer. It also can interfere with the effectiveness of certain medications.



How much fat should I eat?

That depends. Health organizations recommend that we limit fat intake to 30 percent or less of our daily caloric intake. The number of grams of fat you can eat depends on how many calories you need each day. For example, many sedentary women and some older adults need about 1,600 calories per day. Most children, teenage girls, active women, and many sedentary men probably need about 2,200 calories a day. Teenage boys, active men, and some very active women need 2,800 calories or more per day.

The chart below shows various calorie levels and the number of fat grams that equal 30 percent of the calories from fat.

If you eat...	Allow yourself up to:
1200 calories	40 grams of fat per day
1500 calories	50 grams of fat per day
1800 calories	60 grams of fat per day
2100 calories	70 grams of fat per day
2400 calories	80 grams of fat per day
2600 calories	87 grams of fat per day
2800 calories	93 grams of fat per day

Keep in mind, it's not necessary to count the grams of fat you eat each day. But, by being aware of the recommended amount of fat, you can assess your current fat intake and learn what foods you should limit.

Tips for Low-fat Shopping

- Use the Nutrition Facts panel on food labels to select lower-fat foods: “fat-free” means less than 0.5 grams of fat per serving. “Low-fat” has 3 grams of fat or less per serving. “Reduced fat” or “less fat” has at least 25% less fat per serving than a standard serving of the regular food. “Light” foods contain one-third fewer calories or 50% less fat per serving than a standard serving of the regular food.
- Switch to 1% or fat-free milk. Select lower-fat cheese, particularly those made from part-skim milk such as low-fat or fat-free mozzarella, ricotta, or cream cheese.
- Choose more fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole-grain foods, and fish.
- Select lean cuts of beef, pork, lamb and skinless poultry. Loin and round cuts have less fat. Trim all visible fat before cooking.
- Choose low-fat or non-fat versions of your favorite salad dressings, mayonnaise, yogurt, and sour cream.
- Choose low-fat or lite tub margarine instead of butter or stick margarine. Even low-fat or lite margarines are a concentrated source of fat so use them in moderation.
- Buy fewer high-fat snack foods and desserts. Try fresh fruits and vegetables, unbuttered popcorn, pretzels instead of chips, and gingersnaps instead of chocolate chip cookies.