

The Truth About Trans Fats

If you've looked at food labels lately, you may have noticed the claims "no trans fat" or "trans fat free." *What are trans fats and why should you care about them?*

Manufacturers sometimes alter vegetable oils to improve the shelf life, taste or texture of foods. This process results in "partially hydrogenated" oils that produce trans fat. Like saturated fats that occur naturally in meat and dairy products, trans fats can raise your LDL (bad cholesterol) and lower your HDL (good cholesterol), increasing the risk of heart disease.

As of Jan. 1, 2006, the FDA requires that manufacturers list the amount of trans fats on nutrition labels. There is no "daily value" for trans fats, but the USDA advises we keep the amount as low as possible.

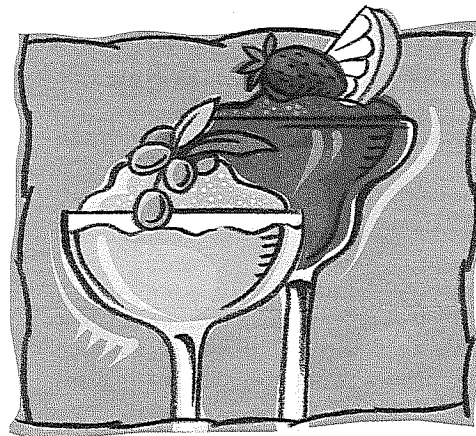
How can you switch to fats that are healthier for your heart?

- 1 Choose vegetable oils such as olive and canola. Limit the use of shortening, stick margarine and animal fats such as butter and lard.
- 2 Select lean meats, low-fat dairy products and fish. Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- 3 Read the Nutrition Facts panel on food labels. *(continued on next page)*

Summer Sun Eye Protection

You know that the sun can damage your skin. But did you know that it can burn your eyes too? Both short-term and long-term sun exposure can cause damage and increase your risk of conditions such as:

- * Cataracts, which can impair vision by clouding the lens. Most Americans develop cataracts by age 80.
- * Photokeratitis ("snow blindness"), a painful burn of the cornea (the central clear covering of the eye) that occurs from excessive sun exposure.
- * Skin cancer, which can occur on the lower eyelids or elsewhere near the eyes.
- * Pterygium, a non-cancerous growth that may partially cover the cornea and require surgery. *(continued on next page)*



Cool Delights

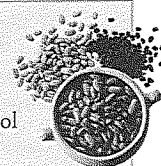
Nothing tastes better on a hot day than a cool treat. *If you're tired of your usual fare, get creative:*

- **Prepare** chilled kebabs from ripe, seasonal fruit and add to a glass of seltzer and ice.
- **Make** green or flavored iced tea and add a bit of fruit juice or spearmint leaves for extra zip.
- **Make** juice spritzers with a splash of diet ginger ale or soda water. How about grape or cranberry juice for a bright refresher?
- **Try** a smoothie. Use vanilla yogurt, vanilla soy milk or nonfat frozen yogurt as the base, then add a mix of delicious fruit. Some good combos are bananas and berries or orange, mango, coconut and pineapple.
- **Make** popsicles in "mocktail" flavors such as piña colada, sangria or margarita.
- **Serve** fizzy limeade or lemonade by using seltzer instead of water in your recipe.
- **Mix** up fruit slushes — combine ice cubes and fruit (lemon, lime or melon work nicely) in a blender with a sweetener.
- **Give** your ice cream maker a workout and experiment with fruit sorbet creations. Recipes for these refreshing taste treats abound on the Internet.

DR. ZORBA'S LONGEVITY CORNER

SUMMER STINGERS Hikers and campers often worry about bites from venomous snakes, but in fact they're a very rare cause of death in the U.S. — fewer than 10 per year. Death from venomous insects such as bees, wasps and hornets is actually more common. Anyone who has ever had allergic symptoms — a rash, hives, itching, flushing or shortness of breath — after being stung should always carry an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen[®]), a pen-like device that quickly delivers adrenaline by a retractable needle. An auto-injector, along with some over-the-counter antihistamines, just might save a life.

"BEAN" TRYING TO LOWER YOUR CHOLESTEROL? Adding a half-cup of cooked beans to your diet daily can lower your cholesterol by 8 percent in just three months.



What You Can Do About Fatigue

If you've been feeling unusually tired for more than a week or two, it's time for some detective work. *Here are some common fatigue suspects:*

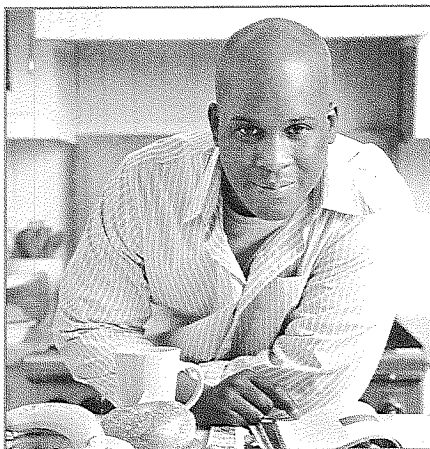
-Poor Diet Use the right "fuel" for your body, starting with breakfast. Though sugar, coffee, tea and chocolate may give you a temporary boost, they may worsen fatigue long term. Combine whole grains, fruits or vegetables with lean protein for staying power — for example, eat a whole-wheat bagel with low-fat cheese and a piece of fruit.

-Lack of Movement Sedentary activities can produce muscle fatigue, but exercise improves oxygen flow and boosts energy.

Keep it simple: Stretch at your desk or take a break with an elastic exercise band. A brisk 10-minute walk will energize you for up to two hours.

-Stress and Anxiety These draining emotions can be exhausting. Take action to relieve bothersome problems, learn some relaxation techniques (yoga and meditation are good choices) and enjoy quiet pursuits, such as reading or listening to soothing music, each day.

-Not Enough Shut-Eye Experts say most of us do best with seven to eight hours of sleep daily. Losing one or two hours of sleep



regularly can decrease your alertness. Improve sleep by avoiding eating, drinking or exercising three to four hours before going to bed, keeping a regular bedtime and taking time to relax before lights out. **Avoid these sleep wreckers:** an uncomfortable mattress, annoying noise or light, alcohol and nicotine.

Your health care provider can also help you uncover the sources of your fatigue. Certain medications, diseases and conditions, such as chronic pain and acid reflux, can affect energy levels. **Catch the energy-draining culprits in your life and solve the mystery of your fatigue.**

EXERCISE ASSISTANT Your cell phone or PDA (personal digital assistant) could take on a new function for you: exercise aid. In a recent study, people who programmed exercise reminder alarms into their PDAs exercised twice as much as those who didn't. **Try it — program more movement into your day.**

Trans Fats ... (cont'd)

4 When eating out, check with your server. Many fried foods and fast foods still contain trans fats and high levels of saturated fats. More than four grams of saturated fat per serving is considered high.

The next time you visit the supermarket, you may be pleased to discover that many of your favorite foods are now available in healthier, trans fat-free versions.

"Life is not merely to be alive, but to be well." — Marcus Valerius Martial

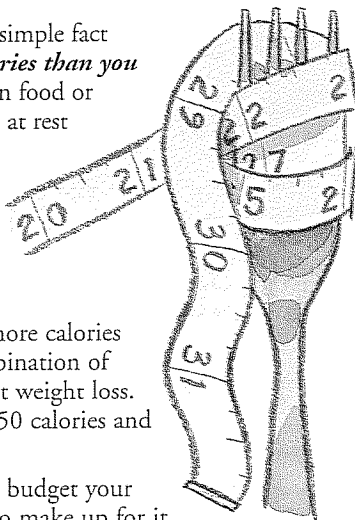
Energy Balance for Weight Control

With all the confusing advice about weight control, one simple fact remains clear: **To lose weight, you must burn more calories than you take in.** Calories are a measure of the energy contained in food or expended by exercise. Everyone burns a few calories even at rest (for example, when sitting or sleeping); physical activity burns even more. Think of energy balance as a seesaw with food on one end and activity on the other. The more you eat, the more you need to exercise to balance the seesaw for weight maintenance or tip it in the direction of weight loss.

■ **To lose one pound** you need to burn 3,500 more calories than you take in. This may sound like a lot, but a combination of eating less and exercising more can add up to significant weight loss. Use the "500 Rule" for losing one pound a week: cut 250 calories and burn an additional 250 calories each day.

■ **Consider budgeting** your calories the way you budget your finances. If you go over your calorie limit one day, try to make up for it with more exercise or less food the next. Your calorie savings will add up over time, so an occasional splurge won't set you back too much.

If you want to know more about your personal calorie balance, go to www.mypyramid.gov and select MyPyramid Plan. You'll get a customized eating plan to help you achieve or maintain a healthy weight.



Summer Sun ... (cont'd)

Fortunately, a few simple steps can protect your eyes from sun damage:

- * Wear a wide-brimmed hat that shades your eyes from the most direct rays.
- * Wear sunglasses that block at least 99 percent of both UVA and UVB rays. Wraparound styles can block the sun from entering from the sides of the frames (but may not be the best choice when driving).
- * If you wear contact lenses, choose a UV-blocking type. Ask your eye care specialist about your options.

Following these simple steps year-round can help keep your vision crystal clear for years to come.

NEXT MONTH: Manage Your Stress Naturally