



Good Fats-Bad Fats-Best Fats

It can be difficult to know which fats are the best to consume! We've learned that we should limit bad fats and that we do need good fats. But what are good fats and where do we find them? Omega fatty acids are getting a lot of attention as being good, but which ones are best? By Rebecca Morley,

The Bad Fats (act like sludge and stick to our blood vessels)

Saturated Fats	Saturated fats raise total blood cholesterol as well as LDL cholesterol (the bad cholesterol).
Trans Fats	Trans fats raise LDL cholesterol (the bad cholesterol) and lower HDL cholesterol (the good cholesterol).

The Good Fats (act like oil to flow through our blood vessels)

Unsaturated fats	Unsaturated fats consist of monounsaturated fats (MUFA) and polyunsaturated fats (PUFA) . (see www.eatright.org)
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Monounsaturated fats lower total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol (the bad cholesterol) and increase the HDL cholesterol (the good cholesterol). Dietary sources of MUFAs include olive oils, canola oils, avocados, nuts and seeds.

Polyunsaturated fats have been shown to deliver considerable benefits for cardiovascular health and cognitive function. Two important forms of PUFAs are omega 3 and omega 6. The trick is balancing these two omega's for optimum health.

Where do omega 6 fatty acids come from? We consume these fats in the form of oils made from vegetables and in animal fats like butter and meat which are also high in omega 6. Omega 6 fatty acids are inexpensive with high profit margins. Therefore, manufacturers benefit from convincing us to eat these types of fats. The average American actually gets too much of this kind of fat. Most of it is hidden in processed foods as vegetable+oil.

Where do we get omega 3 fatty acids? This type of fatty acid comes primarily from plant sources as unsaturated oils and fatty fish. The best sources of omega 3 are nuts (particularly walnuts), flax seeds, olive oil, oysters and fatty (cold water) fish. Fish and flaxseed oil capsules are a source of supplemental omega 3's. (www.mayoclinic.com/health/fish-oil)

Most Americans eat about ten grams of omega 6 fat for every gram of omega 3 (ratio 10:1). **Dr. Cathy Breedon** (PhD, RD and Clinical Nutrition Specialist from ND) recommends that we try to change that ration to 4:1. Studies indicate that increasing the ratio of omega 3 to omega 6 oils has health benefits including lowering the risk of heart disease and diabetes, decreasing nerve damage, helping to treat depression, and decreasing inflammation. Dr. Breedon further recommends that if we have an inflammatory disease, 2:1 may be an even better ratio of omega 6 to omega 3 fats.

In summary, for optimum health, most Americans need to eat more omega 3 fatty acids, while they cut down on omega 6 fatty acids. Cutting processed foods and eating more fatty fish, seeds, and nuts will improve omega

