



Which cooking oil is the best?

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All manufacturers claim their own cooking oil is the best! Canola oil, olive oil, sunflower oil, butter, margarine and even virgin coconut oil each has its supporters. Before we conclude the best cooking oil(s), let's look at the essential - Fats 101. We classified the following fats as "good fats" and "bad fats" based on their heart-smart values: their ability to raise or lower total and LDL cholesterol.

The Bad Fats	
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	
Monounsaturated Fats	Monounsaturated fats lower total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol (the bad cholesterol) and increase the HDL cholesterol (the good cholesterol).
Polyunsaturated Fats	Polyunsaturated fats also lower total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol. Omega 3 fatty acids belong to this group.

Therefore, based on the above classification, the "ideal" cooking oil should contain higher amount of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats and with minimal or no saturated fats and trans fats.

The Verdict? As long as you're using fats and oils sparingly in your cooking and preparation, it would be fine to use any one of the following "good" oils. All of the following oils are low in saturated fats and trans fats. Some have high concentration of monounsaturated fats such as olive oil.

"Good" Cooking Oils:
<i>canola oil</i>
<i>flax seed oil</i>
<i>peanut oil</i>
<i>olive oil</i>
<i>non-hydrogenated soft margarine</i>
<i>safflower oil</i>
<i>sunflower oil</i>
<i>corn oil</i>

The following "bad" oils contain high percentage of trans fat or saturated fats. Some, such as coconut oil, even contain more saturated fats than animal products!

"Bad" Cooking Oils:
<i>Vegetable shortening</i>
<i>Hard margarine</i>
<i>Butter</i>
<i>Palm oil</i>
<i>Palm kernel oil</i>
<i>Coconut oil</i>