

## SEND SATURATED FATS BACK TO THE VATS

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Over the years, we have been inundated with bad news about fat that Americans have a fat-phobia. Fat or oil is not necessarily the enemy; it's the kind of oil consumers are choosing. Reading Nutrition Facts Labels will help you make wiser selections. First you need to understand the difference between oils.

In 1873, the first batch of partially hydrogenated oil was developed in Europe. The American public had its first taste of mass produced "Oleo Margarine" during World War II. Many of you might remember when margarine first became available in the markets. Consumers replaced butter with margarine after hearing reports that the leading cause of heart problems was cholesterol and the public was told to avoid fats. The public was led to believe that partially

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February 8, 2008

hydrogenated oil, commonly called trans fat was not fat because it did not have cholesterol.

Partially hydrogenated oil is produced by heating vegetable oil at very high temperatures and then hydrogen is pumped into the container. This process is stopped right before it is fully saturated. Partially hydrogenated fat is a liquid at room temperature, whereas, saturated fat (commonly found in animals – lard, suet, & butter) is a solid.

Americans have been on a low fat "kick" for nearly 40 years and we still have heart disease and people are heavier now than ever. The low fat diet is loaded with partially hydrogenated oil (or trans fat) with sugar added to enhance flavor and taste. This deadly combination did not help the lowering of cholesterol like everyone thought. This news has caused restaurants to find alternative oils and in January 2006, the government required all foods to have the amount of trans fats placed on the package label.

Research has shown that two aspects of diet must be considered: first, the total amount of fat intake and the second, the types of fats consumed. Natural unaltered vegetable-based oils (such as olive oil, canola oil, soybean, etc.) do not contain cholesterol and will not raise your

cholesterol. Many people don't realize that the human body makes up to 75% of the cholesterol, primarily in the liver, on a "make as you need" supply and demand basis. Cholesterol is essential for our survival as a species. It makes important sex hormones, besides it is essential for brain function and is an important structure in cell membranes for permeability.

Partially hydrogenated oil is a fake food not produced by Mother Nature and it causes an inflammatory response. Your body produces cholesterol to protect itself. Trans fat has also been found to interfere with the metabolic pathways that have to do with brain development and heart health.

Although the Nutrition Facts Label will help consumers avoid trans fats there is a loop hole that you need to be aware of. If a product has one half gram or less of trans fat per serving, the manufacturer can legally say "0 grams trans fat". You need to look at the list of ingredients. If you see partially hydrogenated oils, put the package down and search for another product without this fake oil. Here's the reason why. If you eat more than the serving size of a product that contains partially hydrogenated oil, then you are consuming an unhealthy amount of trans fats. Who can only eat one potato chip?

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You must become label savvy and avoid products that contain partially hydrogenated oils. Reduce your saturated-fat intake by reducing consumption of red meats and whole milk products, such as cheese and butter. Watch the quantity of fats you consume because they are packed with calories.