

### Fat

Fat is a major source of energy in the human diet. Fat, like protein and carbohydrate, is a major nutrient in the food we eat and is necessary to support life. Eating adequate amounts of fats and carbohydrates provides the body with its needed fuel to preserve protein for tissue growth and repair, immune function and other vital functions. Dietary fat is necessary for absorption of the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E & K. Fat in food can give a sense of fullness, satisfaction and reduced desire to eat. Fat is flavorful. If fat absorption is a problem too much fat may cause intestinal problems (diarrhea, foul smelling stools and gas, abdominal pain), and eating smaller amounts may be helpful. Food eaten in amounts greater than the body's need for energy is converted and stored as fat and it doesn't matter if the food is rich in protein, fat or carbohydrate. Excess calories equals weight gain.

Foods are mixtures of different types of fats, such as monounsaturated, polyunsaturated and saturated fats. Mono- and polyunsaturated fats are heart healthier fats compared to saturated fat. Saturated fat raises cholesterol levels.

The number of servings of fat needed daily varies depends upon the body's energy needs. General recommendations are that 20- 35% of total daily calories come from fat and to eat more mono- and polyunsaturated fat and less saturated fat. If you need to 2500-calories a day, you should have no more than 55-80 grams of fat a day. Fat is added to many processed foods. Look at food labels to see how much fat is in each serving. Using the food label, if the % DV is 20% or more for fat or saturated fat, this is a high fat food. Fat is found in foods items such as desserts, baked goods, crackers, meats, poultry skin, salad dressings, popcorn, dairy products, snack items, and more. The table below lists the kinds of fat, nutrient profile, sources of foods high in that type of fat and serving size. Note the small serving size. A gram of fat has twice as many calories as a gram of carbohydrate or protein. A gram of fat equals 9 calories, whereas a gram of carbohydrate or protein equals 4 calories.

Fat Category	Nutrients & Calories Per Serving	Examples	Serving Size
<b>Monounsaturated</b>	5 grams fat 0 grams carbohydrate 0 grams protein 45 calories	Avocado Oils (olive, peanut, canola) Peanut Butter	1/8 of medium 1 tsp 2 tsp
<b>Polyunsaturated</b> *Omega 6 **Omega 3	5 grams fat 0 grams carbohydrate 0 grams protein 45 calories	*Oils (corn, safflower, sunflower, soybean) **Flaxseed **Walnuts, **Brazil nuts	1 tsp 1 Tbsp 4 halves 2 nuts
<b>Saturated</b>	5 grams fat 0 grams carbohydrate 0 grams protein 45 calories	Bacon Butter, lard, margarine Cream, sour cream Cream cheese	1 slice 1 tsp 2 Tbsp 1 Tbsp

Note: The listed serving sizes of nuts contain 1-3 grams of protein.

**For more information or to sign up for nutrition classes call:**

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