

Food and Nutrition – Low fat

Year 7 - Unit 4

What are fats?

Fats are nutrients in food that the body uses to build nerve tissue (including the brain and nerves) and hormones. The body also uses fat as fuel. If fats eaten aren't burned as energy or used as building blocks, they're stored by the body in fat cells. Fat gives food flavor and texture, but it's also high in calories and excess amounts of fatty foods can cause many health problems.

There are two main types:

Saturated – those that come from animal sources e.g. milk, fish, eggs

Unsaturated – those that are plant based e.g. sunflower oil, avocado



They might seem fine on the outside...

But too much saturated fat can lead to the build up of harmful fat in the body that we can't see. This can cause serious diseases in the future, such as **heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers**.

Easy ways to cut back



Look for lower-fat

Buy dairy products with less fat, like lower-fat cheese and low fat lower-sugar yoghurts. For a healthier start to the day, try lower-fat milk on your cereal and lower-fat spread on your toast.



Choose healthy fats

Go for foods that are rich in unsaturated fat, like fish, avocado, unsalted nuts and seeds.



Start smart

Pastries and croissants are full of sat fat. Swap for plain cereal, toast with lower-fat spread, fruited teacakes or a bagel with some banana slices.



Clever cooking

Avoid adding extra oil or butter when cooking. Try grilling, baking, steaming or poaching instead.



Choose smart snacks

After school, swap biscuits and muffins for healthier snacks like fruit, plain rice cakes, toast with lower-fat spread, fruited teacakes or bagels.

FAT FREE

LOW FAT



Labelling

When it comes to fat, food packages can say many things, such as fat-free, low-fat, reduced fat, and light (or lite). The government has strict rules about the use of two of these phrases. By law: **fat-free** foods can contain no more than 0.5 grams of fat per serving

low-fat foods may contain 3 grams of fat or less per serving

Traffic lights:



Red means it's high in that so think about how much of it you eat

Orange means it has a medium amount. It makes it an ok choice

Green means it's low in that nutrient = it's a healthy choice

Keywords	Definition
Cholesterol	Cholesterol floats around in your blood and can get into the walls of the blood vessels. This can cause the blood vessels to get stiffer, narrower, or clogged. If the clogging gets worse over many years, it can cause a heart attack or stroke in adults.
Diabetes	A condition linked to not being able to balance blood sugar levels
Obesity	Caused by having very high fat levels
Saturated	Bad fat, from animal sources
Unsaturated	Good fat, from vegetable and plant sources



Scan the shelves

Use the **Food Scanner app** to see how much fat is in your favourite food or drink – look for products that are low in sat fat.

More advice:
www.nhs.uk/change4life