

## Heart-healthy Eating for Diabetes

### *Choosing fats that promote heart health*

*This handout describes different kinds of fats and offers tips to help people with diabetes make food choices that promote a healthy heart.*

### Heart-healthy Eating

Dietary fats do not raise your blood glucose level like carbohydrates do, but they still affect blood glucose. High-fat foods take longer for your body to break down than low-fat foods. If you eat a meal with a lot of fat, it may take longer for your blood glucose level to return to your target range.

Your body needs fat, but eating too much fat may change your body in unhealthy ways and can lead to weight gain.

Follow these recommendations from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to help prevent heart disease and manage diabetes:

- Eat a balanced diet with whole, *unprocessed* foods. Unprocessed foods include whole grains (such as brown rice, whole wheat, oats, and quinoa), fruits, vegetables, and lean protein sources.
- Eating whole, unprocessed foods will help limit *saturated fats*, *trans fats*, and *cholesterol* (see page 3 to learn about these types of fat).
- Choose heart-healthy *unsaturated fats* (see page 2 to learn about these types of fats, which are found mostly in plant-based foods).
- Eat more plant-based or vegetarian meals using beans and soy foods for protein.
- Eating whole, unprocessed foods will also help limit the amount of *sodium* (salt) you eat.
- Limit *refined carbohydrates* such as white bread and pasta, sugar, sweets, and sugar-sweetened beverages. Your dietitian can help you figure out a healthy amount of carbohydrate for each meal and snack.
- If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation. Limit alcohol to one serving a day for women or 2 servings a day for men. One serving is equal to 12 oz. of beer, **or** 5 oz. of wine, **or** 1.5 oz. of liquor.



Olive oil is one source of healthy fat.

## Healthy Fats

*Monounsaturated fats, polyunsaturated fats, and Omega-3 fatty acids* are healthy for your heart. These types of fat can help lower cholesterol levels when used to replace saturated fat. Use them in moderation.

### Sources of Monounsaturated Fats

- Oils: Olive, peanut, canola
- Avocados and guacamole
- Olives
- Nuts: Almonds, cashews, mixed nuts, peanuts, and pecans
- All-natural nut butters made from peanuts, cashews, or almonds
  - All-natural nut butters are made without *hydrogenated fats* (also known as trans fats).
  - These types of nut butters will need to be stirred after opening, as they have oil on the top.

### Sources of Polyunsaturated Fats

- Oils: Safflower, corn, grapeseed, soy, and sunflower
- Margarine made with the oils listed above (make sure the label says “trans-free” or “trans-fat free”)
- Tofu
- Certain nuts and seeds: Pumpkin, sunflower, hemp and chia seeds, ground flax, walnuts, pine nuts, and Brazil nuts

### Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Omega-3 fatty acids are also sources of polyunsaturated fats. Omega-3 fats are very healthy for your heart. Eat omega-3 fats 2 to 3 times a week.

#### Sources:

- Fish such as salmon, tuna, halibut, red snapper, cod, herring, mackerel, oysters, scallops, and sardines
- Walnuts and walnut oil
- Ground flaxseed, flaxseed oil, hemp seeds, and chia seeds
- Canola oil

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns. If you are a patient at:

- Endocrine and Diabetes Care Center**, call 206.598.4882 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- UW Neighborhood Clinic**, call 206.520.5000 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Your provider's name and phone number:**

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## Use These Fats Less Often

### Saturated Fats

*Saturated fats* are usually found in animal and dairy products and can increase cholesterol levels. Sources of saturated fats include:

- Butter, shortening, and stick margarine
- Cheese, cream, and whole milk
- Coconut oil, cocoa butter, and palm kernel oil
- Meat fat and poultry skin

### Hydrogenated Fats (Trans Fats)

Hydrogenation is when liquid fat (oil) is made into solid fat (such as stick margarine). Hydrogenated fats are often called *trans fats*. Try not to eat hydrogenated or partially-hydrogenated fats.

#### Examples:

- Shortening and stick margarine
- Processed foods such as: crackers, store-bought cookies and cakes, most peanut butters, doughnuts, French fries, microwave or movie popcorn, and most potato and tortilla chips

## General Tips

Use the chart below for ways to replace saturated and trans fats with healthier options.

Instead of:	Try:
Whole milk, cheese, full-fat yogurt, and ice cream	1% or 1/2% milk fat dairy products, low-fat cheese, non-fat yogurt, and low-fat ice cream
Fatty cuts of beef and pork	Lean beef, pork, or venison
Poultry with skin, fried chicken	Poultry cooked with the skin removed, grilled or boiled
Butter, stick margarine	Reduced-fat butter, whipped or liquid spreads
Coconut oil, palm oil, shortening	Liquid vegetable oils: corn, canola, olive, soybean, and safflower oils.