

MyPlate: Oils and Fats

Oils, or fats, are part of a healthful diet. But too much of the wrong kinds can affect your heart and your overall health, today and in the future. Learn a little about the different types of fat to make your choices healthy ones.

Fats can be solid or liquid at room temperature. Solid fats come from many animal foods. Butter, stick margarine, lard, shortening, and fatty meats contain saturated fats and trans fats – bad fats for your heart and your health.

Instead, choose fats that are good for you, called monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Most healthy fats or oils come from different plants and fish and are liquid at room temperature. Here are some examples: canola oil, corn oil, and olive oil. Foods rich in healthy oils include different nuts, olives, fish, and avocados.

Fats and oils are generally measured in teaspoons. One tablespoon of soft margarine, one tablespoon of Italian salad dressing, or eight large olives all contain one teaspoon of oil or a serving size. Most people get enough oil from the foods they eat each day. But most of us could benefit from choosing more healthy fats and oils, while reducing the amount of bad fats we eat. Active women can have 5 servings of healthy fats or oils, while active men can have 6 each day.

Once you know your oils and choose those that will benefit your health, you are taking the steps you need to better heart health, for today and tomorrow. To make your choices healthier download the Start Simple with MyPlate app to set food goals and see your progress in real-time.