

# Healthy Fat vs. Unhealthy Fats: Saturated Fats and Unsaturated Fats

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## Editorial

Dietary fats are necessary for maintaining good health. They provide you energy, protect your organs, keep your cells growing, keep your blood pressure in check, and aid in the absorption of certain nutrients. Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats lower dangerous LDL cholesterol levels while also providing nutrients for cell development and maintenance [1]. Polyunsaturated fats also contain omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids, which are necessary for a variety of bodily processes. Trans fat is a form of dietary fat that has been linked to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease. It's present in trace levels in animal products including red meat and dairy. Trans fats are mostly synthetic and may be found in processed meals, fried foods, and commercial baked products.

Carbon and hydrogen are the building blocks of all lipids. Saturated fats are made up of long chains of carbon atoms with as many hydrogen atoms as feasible [2]. The carbons have reached their saturation point. The carbon chains are stiffer and less flexible because they are so densely packed with hydrogen atoms. This is why saturated fats, such as butter and the white fat on a cut of red meat, remain solid at room temperature. At normal temperature, unsaturated fats are liquid (not solid like saturated varieties). They have fewer hydrogen atoms bound to carbon atoms structurally (i.e., they're less saturated). Monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats are the two primary subclasses of unsaturated fats.

Both monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are good for your heart, although polys appear to have a tiny advantage over monos [3]. Lipids are a sort of molecule that makes up a variety of bodily structures [4]. They're necessary for bodily function, but eating too many of them can put you at risk for a variety of disorders. Fat should account for between 20% and 35% of your total daily calories, according to the American Heart Association (AHA). There are two forms of saturated fats: saturated and unsaturated fats. Unsaturated fat should make up the majority of your diet [5]. However, research reveal that eating exclusively unsaturated fats may not be as heart-healthy as previously assumed, and that eating saturated fats may not be as hazardous.

## Lifestyle changes to improve cholesterol

- A heart-healthy diet often restricts saturated and trans fats while emphasising healthier unsaturated fats, as well as lots of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein. Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet, Mediterranean diet, and Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes (TLC) diet are all examples of heart-healthy eating patterns.
- Anyone, regardless of weight, can be affected by high cholesterol

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levels. Excess body weight, on the other hand, is a risk factor for abnormal cholesterol levels. If you're overweight, even a small amount of weight loss can help lower your cholesterol.

- Adults should do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week, or roughly 30 minutes on most, if not all, days of the week.
- Control your stress levels since persistent stress can cause your HDL cholesterol to drop and your LDL cholesterol to raise.
- Smoking can raise LDL cholesterol while lowering HDL cholesterol. HDL cholesterol is regarded as "healthy" since it aids in the removal of excess cholesterol from tissues. Having higher HDL can help you live longer and reduce your risk of heart disease.
- If changing your lifestyle isn't enough to decrease your cholesterol, you may need to take cholesterol medication as well.
- Furthermore, just because you're taking cholesterol medication doesn't mean you should stop striving to change your lifestyle behaviours. Cholesterol-lowering drugs are most effective when combined with other heart-healthy lifestyle modifications.

## Conclusion

Cholesterol ratio may be one of the tests reported when your healthcare professional checks your risk for heart disease. It is calculated from total cholesterol and HDL cholesterol. A lower number indicates lower risk, with the optimal level being between 3.5 and 1.

## Conflict of Interest

None.

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