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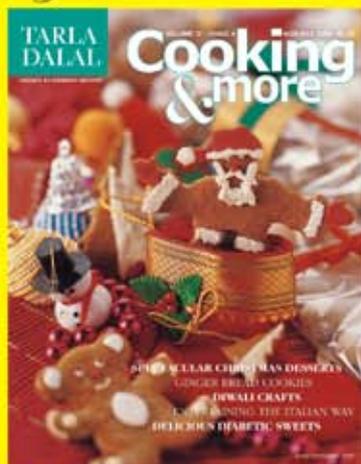
Cooking & more

Thanks to all my Readers

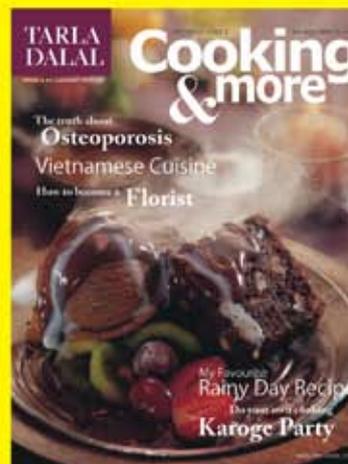
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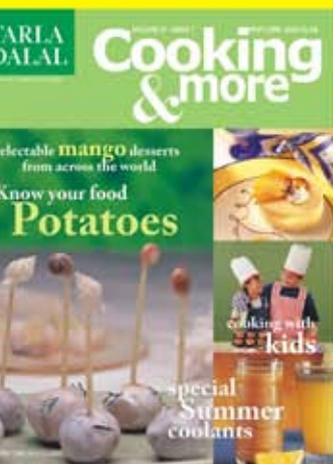
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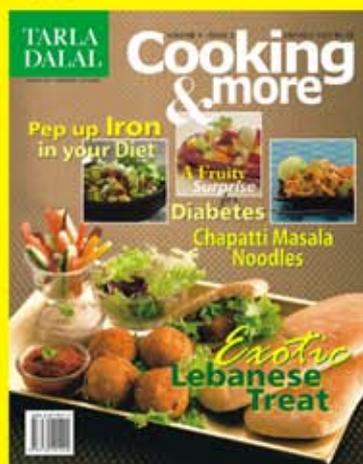
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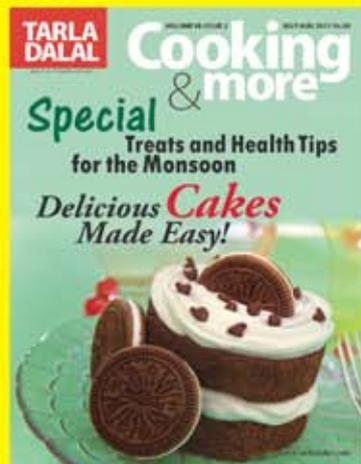
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FACTS ABOUT FAT

Dr. Nupur Krishnan clarifies some common misconceptions about fat

One of the prevailing misconceptions among health conscious people is that fat should be completely avoided from food because it elevates blood cholesterol. This is completely wrong. Though fat is the major source of cholesterol, it performs many essential metabolic processes in the body that keep us healthy.

- Fat and oils provide a concentrated source of energy for the body. One gram of fat provides 9 calories whereas one gram of carbohydrate or protein provides only 4 calories.
- Fat helps to store energy in the body. When energy levels drop, fat is burnt to fill the gap.
- Fat enables our body to metabolise proteins and carbohydrates more efficiently, hence promoting digestion.
- Fat helps to give a feeling of satiety, i.e., provide a sense of fullness.
- Fat acts as an insulator to maintain body temperature.
- Fat protects the organs and insulates body tissues.
- Fat helps the body to absorb and transport fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K. Avoiding fat will lead to vitamin deficiency disorders.
- Fat also helps in the production of oestrogen and testosterone hormones.
- Fat plays an important role in food preparation by enhancing food flavour, adding mouth- feel, making baked products tender, and conducting heat during cooking.

Foods in general contain two types of fats, namely visible fat" and invisible fats.

Visible fats are fats extracted from oilseeds (vegetables oils), animal fats (meat, butter and ghee), and fish oils (shark and cod liver oils).

Invisible fats are an integral part of foods and are therefore not visible. Almost everything we eat contains a small amount of invisible fat, such as cereals, pulses, milk and milk products, flesh foods, dry fruits, etc.

Quantity of fat intake

The total fat (visible and invisible) in the diet varies from person to person based on gender, age, physical activity and physiological status. In general, 15-25% of the total energy requirement should come from fats. Based on physical activity, visible fat intake in the diet per person per day should be at least 20 gm and can go up to 40 gm.

- 7-10% of total calories should come from saturated fats
- About 10-15% of total calories should come from monounsaturated fats
- About 10% of total calories should come from poly unsaturated fats

Despite its many benefits, if we consume too much fat it will get stored in our body and be converted into cholesterol. Hence the body fat percentage should be within an acceptable range.

Gender	Age	Desired Body Fat Percentage
Male	< 28 years	Less than 18
Male	40 +	Less than 21
Female	22	Less than 19
Female	30 +	Less than 22

Although all fats have the same amount of calories, some are more harmful than others. While some fats are converted into good cholesterol, others are converted into bad cholesterol, directly linked to major health problems like heart attack, stroke, etc. Therefore it is essential to consume fats judiciously in the right quantity.

A. Saturated Fatty Acids: There are found chiefly in animal sources such as meat and poultry, milk, butter, cheese, and in most commercially baked products such as snack foods and baked foods (*nan*

khataai, biscuits, chips, *khakra*, etc.). Some vegetable oils like coconut, palm kernel oil, and palm oil contain saturated fat. Saturated fats are usually solid at room temperature. Saturated fats are converted into Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL) which is considered as bad cholesterol, causing blockage in arteries and causing risk of heart attack and stroke.

B. Unsaturated Fats: These are considered good for health because they are converted into good cholesterol - High Density Lipoprotein (HDL), which acts as a sweeper of bad cholesterol, thus reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease. HDL picks up excess cholesterol circulating in the blood and deposited in the blockages and carries it back to the liver. The liver reprocesses or excretes it from the body. There are two types of unsaturated fats - monounsaturated and polyunsaturated. Of these, polyunsaturated fatty acids are slightly more beneficial than monounsaturated fatty acids.

Monounsaturated Fatty Acids are found mainly in vegetable oils such as canola, olive, and peanut oils; and nuts such as peanuts, hazelnuts, cashews and almonds. They are liquid at room temperature.

Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids such as linoleic acid and alpha-linolenic acid are called essential fatty acids because they are necessary for cell structure and hormones. They are found mainly in vegetable oils such as sunflower, corn, and flaxseed; walnuts and brazil nuts. They are liquid or soft at room temperature.

Polyunsaturated fats can be divided into two categories:

- **Omega-3 fats** are found in both plant and marine foods and have been found to reduce the risk of heart disease. Food sources include canola and soy oils and canola based margarines. Sea foods include fish especially oily fish such as salmon, mackerel, tuna and sardines.
- **Omega-6 fats** are found primarily in nuts, seeds and plant oils such as corn, soy and safflower.

Benefits of omega fats

- Lower blood cholesterol levels and reduce important risk factor in coronary heart disease
- Improve blood vessel elasticity
- Prevent blood clot formation
- Reduce inflammation and boost the immune system
- Contribute to the normal development of the foetal brain

C. Trans Fatty Acids raise total blood cholesterol levels and also tend to lower good cholesterol (HDL), and are thus potentially more damaging. Trans fats also increase triglyceride levels in the blood, adding to our risk of heart disease.

Consumption of trans fats over a long period can also lead to diabetes, obesity, immune system dysfunction and cancer. Sources of trans fats in the diet include snack foods and baked goods made with partially hydrogenated vegetable oil or vegetable shortening.

Sources of Cholesterol

Though cholesterol comes from dietary cholesterol and fat content of food we consume, fat is the major contributor to blood cholesterol.

Dietary cholesterol is found in many foods, although you cannot taste it or see it on your plate. All animals have the ability to produce cholesterol and all foods from animal sources like milk, egg yolk, cheese, butter, organ meats, poultry and fish contain cholesterol.

Blood cholesterol, which is converted from the fats we consume, is an odourless fat-like, waxy substance. Since blood cholesterol is waxy and cannot dissolve in water, it either floats in blood or sticks to artery walls.

The whole idea of modifying fat consumption is to achieve desirable levels of various types of cholesterol.

Cholesterol type	Desired levels
Total Cholesterol	Less than 200 mg/dl
LDL	Less than 90 mg/dl
HDL	45 – 60 mg/dl
Triglycerides	Less than 150 mg/dl

High levels of triglycerides derived from food sources are commonly associated with obesity, diabetes mellitus, and insulin resistance, and appear to be an important independent risk factor in persons with lower LDL or HDL levels.

Do only obese people have high cholesterol?

No. Even a lean and thin person can have a high level of blood cholesterol. Always test your cholesterol levels regularly.

Can bypass surgery reduce cholesterol levels?

No. Bypass surgery only facilitates blood supply to the heart through an alternative blood vessel. If the arteries are blocked with cholesterol, dietary modification is the only permanent solution; this will reduce bad cholesterol and prevent further risk of heart attack.

Can exercise increase good cholesterol?

No. Exercise regulates metabolism and reduces the accumulation of total cholesterol. However dietary sources are the only way to increase good cholesterol.

What is the difference between oil and fat?

Oils are liquid at room temperatures and fats are solids at room temperature.

DIETARY GUIDELINES TO KEEP YOUR HEART HEALTHY

- Include five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
- Eat balanced meals comprising whole grains, beans, and legumes and 2-3 servings of low-fat or fat-free dairy products each day.
- Carefully choose the type of fats and oils you consume.
- Opt for plant foods and vegetable oils.
- Fat from varied sources is better than any single kind
- Avoid hydrogenated fats such as ghee, Vanaspati, Dalda, etc.
- Consume 100-200 gm of fish twice a week; however, avoid shell fish, crabs, lobsters, shrimps, clams, etc.
- Opt for low fat milk (skimmed milk) and yoghurt instead of whole milk.
- Limit/avoid cheese, and concentrated milk products like *mawa*, *lassi*, *shrikhand*, etc.
- Avoid egg yolk and its preparations such as mayonnaise, salad dressings, cakes, pastries, etc.
- Avoid all organ meat like liver, kidney and brain; and red meat (beef, pork, mutton).
- Opt for lean meat (meat trimmed of fat) and chicken without skin and fat.
- Avoid using coconut (fresh or dry), peanuts, and dry fruits for cooking.
- Avoid all fried foods. Adapt cooking methods such as steaming, baking, broiling, and grilling to minimise the use of oils.
- Use margarine spreads instead of butter or dairy blends.

- Use salad dressings and mayonnaise made from canola, sunflower, soy and olive oils.
- Try to limit snack foods such as potato crisps and corn crisps to once a week or less.
- Snack on plain, unsalted nuts and fresh fruit.
- Incorporate dried peas (like split peas), dried beans (like haricot beans, kidney beans) or lentils in your diet.
- Avoid refined flour foods like pasta and noodles.
- Try to limit cakes, pastries and chocolate or creamy biscuits.
- Consume fibre-rich foods to decrease deposition of fats. For example, whole-wheat flour, *jowar*, *bajra*, maize, whole pulses (*mung*, *chana*, *rajma*), dals, fruits and vegetables.
- A daily brisk walk of 30-45 minutes regulates metabolism and prevents deposition of cholesterol.
- Body weight is directly proportional to calorie intake; hence avoid overeating to control your weight.
- Fat around the abdomen is more dangerous than fat around the hips. Keep your waistline trim. Maintain a waist to hip ratio of < 1 (men) and < 0.8 (women).

What Dr. Nupur Krishnan's clients say:

Mrs. Neelu on cholesterol: My cholesterol levels were very high at 286 mg/dl, but within 30 days of diet treatment my cholesterol reached normal levels at 186 and triglycerides came down from 247 to 131. In fact during my treatment, I ate ice cream and pizzas and still got excellent results!

Mr. Walkar on triglycerides:

Due to a hereditary condition my triglyceride level used to be very high – 858 mg/dl despite taking a heavy dose of medicines. After my diet therapy it came down to 204 within 90 days without any medicine.



Dr. Nupur Krishnan - Ph.D. Food and Nutrition Director (Bio-Logics Nutrition Clinics) - is a Clinical Nutritionist with a decade of proven experience. Kindly put this as Dr. Nupur Krishnan - Director (Bio-Logics Nutrition Clinics), is a Clinical Nutritionist with more than a decade of proven experience.

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