
Weighing In May 2017

Fat Is a 4 Letter Word

For year's fat was a four letter word. We were told to banish it from our diets whenever possible. We switched to low-fat foods, but when we did, it did not make us healthier. By cutting back on all fat we cut out both healthy fats as well as dangerous ones because we didn't know the difference.

Some oils and fatty foods contain chemicals called essential fatty acids, which our bodies need for good health. Dr. Patricia Kendall from Colorado State University states: "We emphasize too many people were eating low-fat foods, but all these new studies on oils and high-fat foods such as nuts and cold water fish have shown we have been ignoring much-needed fats."

So how can you tell the difference between good fats and bad fats? The two essential fatty acids most important to our health are omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, but we need these in the right balance in order to protect our heart, joints, pancreas, skin and our mood. Unfortunately, we eat way too much Omega-6 which is found in corn and vegetable oil used throughout the American diet and much too little omega-3.

Too much Omega-6 causes inflammation that will raise your blood pressure, increase risk of blood clots and can cause a heart attack or stroke. Since we don't eat nearly enough Omega 3 that is anti-inflammatory in nature and reduces our risk for heart disease and cancer, we end up with higher risk of disease.

Some of the good fats known as polyunsaturated and monounsaturated also contain Omega 3. Omega 3 is found in fish and fish oil, all green leafy vegetables, flax seed, hemp, and walnuts. You may wonder if that is bad for you, but remember your body needs some fat from food (especially the healthy fats). Fat is a major source of energy and helps you absorb vitamins and minerals. Fat is needed to build cell membranes, a sheet surrounding the nerves and the vital exterior of each cell in your body. In addition, Omega-3 fats are also essential for blood clotting, muscle movement, and inflammation.

The bad fats include industrial made trans fats and saturated fat. Some polyunsaturated fats fall in the middle, remember too much polyunsaturated fat could cause inflammation. The most dangerous dietary fat is called trans fat, it is a byproduct of the process called hydrogenation that is used to turn healthy oils into solids and to prevent them becoming rancid. When vegetable oil is heated in the presence of the hydrogen and a heavy metal catalyst such as palladium the hydrogen atoms are added to the carbon chain. This is what turns oil into solids such as Crisco. It also makes healthy vegetable oils more like the not so healthy saturated fats.

Adding to the confusion is the food list that manufacturers are supposed to put on the label substance is typically listed as partially hydrogenated oil, not trans fat. As food makers learn new ways to use partially hydrogenated vegetable oils they begin appearing in everything from commercial cookies to pastries to fast food and French fries.

Eating foods rich in trans-fats also increases the amount of harmful LDL cholesterol in the bloodstream and removes the beneficial HDL-cholesterol increasing your risk for heart disease and stroke. Trans-fat starts a inflammatory response which is also linked to diabetes and multiple other chronic conditions. They also contributed to insulin resistance which is a risk for developing type II diabetes.

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The Harvard school of public health conducted a study that indicates trans fats can harm your health and even small amounts. For every 2% of calories from trans fat consumed daily the risk of heart disease rises by 23%. Trans-fats have no known health benefits, and there are no safe levels of consumption. Today these mainly human-made fats are rapidly fading from our food supply thanks to increased education on the dangers of trans fat.

The bottom line is that good oils like olive oil and other monounsaturated fatty acids that raise good cholesterol and provide an excellent source of vitamin E (an antioxidant that reduces the oxygen-related damage to the vascular system) should not be feared.

Canola oil, on the other hand, has loads of monounsaturated fatty acids in the form of oleic acid. This acid has been shown to reduce blood cholesterol levels and may lower LDL or bad cholesterol levels without changing the good cholesterol levels of HDL. Also, canola oil is high in essential polyunsaturated fatty acids that our bodies can't make called alpha-linolenic acid and linoleic acid.

Oils to avoid simply include most vegetable oils that are high in omega 6 fatty acids, such as regular vegetable oil, corn oil, safflower oil, soybean oil, and cottonseed oil.

I hope that this gives you some insight into fats and the truth about fats. It's not as difficult as it sounds, and there still are ongoing studies.

Any questions, please don't hesitate to ask us.

Blessings,
Chuck Shaffer MD

Ingredients:

4 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts, trimmed and each cut lengthwise into two pieces
2 - 3 tsp. olive oil
1 tsp. poultry seasoning
salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
1 lb. fresh asparagus
1 cup chicken stock, simmered to reduce to 3/4 cup
1/4 C heavy whipping cream
3 T Parmesan cheese
1/4 - 1/2 cup finely grated sharp white cheddar



Directions: Preheat oven to 375F. Spray a rectangular casserole dish with non-stick spray or olive oil.

Trim all visible fat and membrane from chicken breasts and cut each one in half lengthwise. Season chicken with poultry seasoning, salt, and pepper, then heat the olive oil in a large frying pan and brown the chicken until it's lightly browned on both sides. (The chicken will cook more in the oven so it doesn't need to be cooked completely through at this point; don't overcook.) Put the browned chicken pieces into the casserole dish. While chicken browns, cut off woody ends of asparagus. (Snap one piece to see how much to cut off, it will break off right where the woody part starts.) Cut asparagus diagonally into 2 - 3 inch pieces. Bring a pan of lightly salted water to a gentle boil, and prepare a dish with water and ice cubes. Put asparagus into the boiling water and cook exactly three minutes, drain, then put asparagus in ice water to stop cooking and drain again. Let it drain well, then blot the asparagus on both sides with paper towels. Layer asparagus pieces over the chicken in the casserole dish. Use chicken stock to deglaze pan that you cooked the chicken in and scrape up all little browned bits. Let stock simmer over medium heat in the frying pan a few minutes, or until the stock is reduced to 3/4 cup. Reduce heat to low, whisk Parmesan cheese and heavy whipping Cream into sauce until well combined. Pour sauce over chicken and asparagus and sprinkle sharp cheddar over top. Bake 25-30 minutes or until cheese is melted and sauce mixture is barely starting to bubble. (Don't cook it too long or the sauce will separate.) Serve hot.

Why deviations can hold us back:

With Easter not far behind us, our staff has heard a lot about deviations lately during weekly visits with patients. The major question we get is how long will it take me to get back on track? This is really a loaded question. Let us explain:

Our liver is the main organ that dictates ketone production. The liver must be depleted of its glycogen “liver sugar” stores in order to produce ketones. Think of the liver as a tank of gas, a full tank would be about 100 grams of carbs (or sugar). This tank will last about 12-16 hours (sometimes more). The major determinant of whether the liver will make ketones is the amount of glycogen (carbs or sugar) present. Keep in mind too that in order to be in ketosis you need to eat less than 50 grams of carbohydrate per day. This includes your stage 2 fruits and veggies. Anything eaten above and beyond this like too much fruit or deviations such as chocolate, chips, candy, cake, etc will result in refilling the liver’s tank. If the tank gets too full, you will be out of ketosis.

So, how do we know how full your tank actually got after a slip up? You can guesstimate by just how much foods you ate off the program and how often. For example, a plate of pasta probably has close to 120 grams of carbohydrate. This much carbohydrate will probably take 15-20 hours to empty from the liver. If you deviate more the next day, the liver’s tank would fill up again and delay your ability to get back into ketosis more.

You may be thinking, well what about the 50 grams of carbohydrate that are allowed on the program, doesn’t this constantly fill my tank half way? The answer is no. This is why we start patients on stage 1 of the program. It allows for the liver’s tank to be completely depleted. The 50 grams of carbohydrate you add in are then burned from the tank (liver) quickly. But if you are eating stage 2 and adding little deviations over time on things like candy, cake, chocolate, chips, etc the tank will begin to fill up again affecting your ability to remain in ketosis overtime.

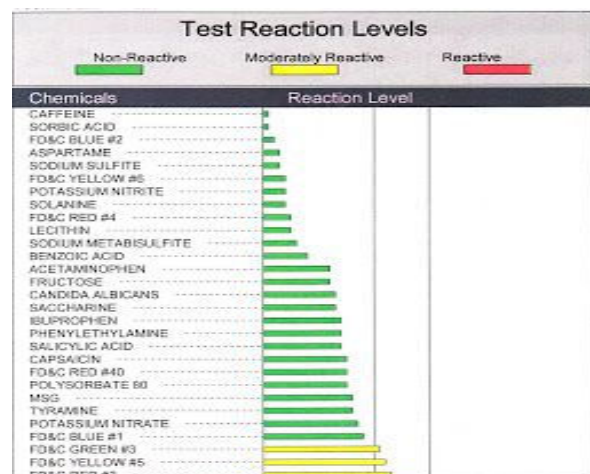
So in short, the more deviations you make on a consistent basis the harder it will be for you to remain in ketosis and see progress each week. This is why it is so important to keep your blinders on and stay the course! If you need recipe ideas please ask us and remember to also check out our recipe section on our website.

-Tricia Foley, MS, RD

Are you suffering from one of the following?

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