



Fats are Good!

Don't Fight the Fats, Find the Fats That Are Good for You!

Most people have been conditioned to believe that all fats are bad. Not only are fats associated with obesity, they are associated with poor health. As a result, many foods have made the claim to be healthy because they are “low fat” or “no fat.”

Animal fats, in particular, are demonized. Margarine, an artificial food made from processed vegetable oils has been labeled heart healthy, while real butter and eggs are blamed for heart disease because they contain saturated fats and cholesterol. This continues to be the case even though it is now a well-established fact that inflammation, not fat and cholesterol, causes heart disease.

The truth is, that much of what has been taught about fats is highly misleading or outright false. This issue of *Sunshine Sharing* will help clarify the truth about these fat falsehoods, because the truth is that fats are not inherently bad. You shouldn't try to avoid fat if you want to be healthy.

Instead, you should focus on the fats and oils you choose to include in your diet. In other words, you shouldn't avoid fats, you should embrace healthy fats and oils that will enhance your health. We'll begin by looking at the research of Dr. Weston Price, a prominent American dentist who spent the better part of a decade studying human nutrition.

Guess What? Traditional Diets Were High in Fat!

During the 1930s Dr. Weston Price examined the dietary habits of fourteen isolated traditional cultures where people enjoyed superb health. The indigenous people he examined had almost no tooth decay, gum disease, impacted wisdom teeth or crooked teeth. He also observed they had strong bones, were highly resistant to contagious diseases and had very low crime rates. Women were able to give birth without difficulty to healthy children. In short, these indigenous people were physically, mentally and emotionally healthy.



Dr. Price also examined people living in the same region of the world who ate the refined and processed foods of Western civilization. He found these people had numerous problems with their teeth and their general health. Infectious diseases were common. Women had numerous complications in childbirth. Crime and mental illness were common.

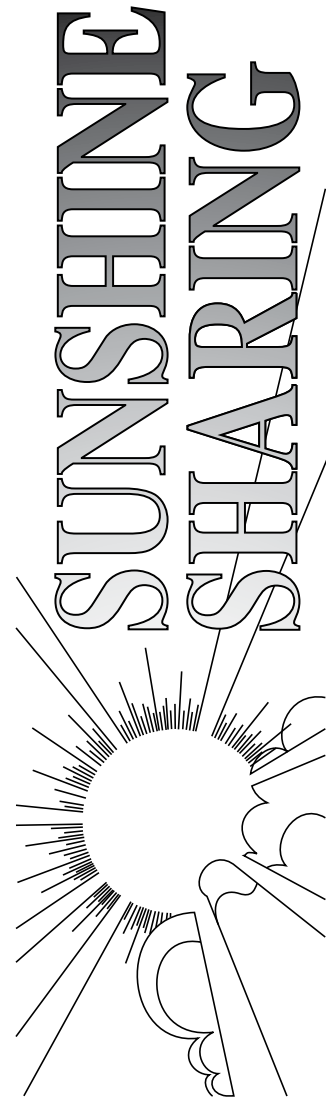
Dr. Price took samples of the foods from both groups and had them nutritionally analyzed. He found that the foods indigenous people ate contained about four times more macro minerals like calcium and magnesium, about four times more water-soluble vitamins (B complex and C) and *ten* times more fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E and K).

The reason these people had so many fat soluble vitamins is because they ate many fatty foods. Typically 40-80% of the calories in these traditional diets were from fats. In fact, he found that the indigenous people with the healthiest teeth, bones and bodies regularly ate fatty seafoods, whole milk dairy from grass-fed animals and/or organ meats from grass fed animals.

Of course, these people ate whole plant foods such as fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds and grains in their whole, unrefined state. They didn't have refined sugar, white flour, processed vegetable oils or canned foods. But, clearly, these diets weren't low in fat. Rather, you might say these indigenous people were living off the “fat of the land.”

Dr. Price published his findings in a book called *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*. His work is being carried on today by The Weston A. Price Foundation (westonaprice.org) where you can learn more about his work. The main point here is that Dr. Price found that healthy native people

Continued on page 2



Your guide to better health the natural way.

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Important Notice

The information in *Sunshine Sharing* is for educational purposes only and should not be used to diagnose and treat diseases. If you have a health problem, we recommend you consult a competent health practitioner before embarking on any course of treatment.

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Managing Editor/Writer: Steven Horne
Editor: David Horne
Associate Editors: Carolyn Hughes,
Katie Horne

Continued from page one

had high fat diets, not low fat diets. This begs the question, why are fats so important to health?

You Need Good Fats



Here are just a few ways that fats are important to good health.

First of all, fats are a major component of all cell membranes. Without good fats, you can't have healthy cells. This is especially true for cells in the brain and nervous system. In fact, fifty-percent of the dry weight of the brain and nerve tissue is fat. So, you want to be a "fat head" to have good mental health.

Next, fats are important sources of fuel for keeping the body energized and warm. People who live in colder climates need more fat to stay warm, which is why Eskimos have such high fat diets with no heart disease. Furthermore, fats are actually the preferred fuel of the heart, so a diet higher in fats and low in simple carbohydrates actually increases, not decreases, cardiovascular health.

Also, contrary to popular belief, fats are not the primary culprit in obesity either. The body stores excess carbohydrates as fats. So, people who eat low fat foods tend to end up eating more carbohydrates which are then stored as fat. On other hand, eating fat helps satiate the appetite and primes the body to burn fats.

Another important use of fats is in regulating the immune system. A proper balance of omega-3 and omega-6 essential fatty acids reduces pain and inflammation. Fats also help the body fight infection. For example, research shows that caprylic acid, a medium chain saturated fatty acid found in coconut oil and butter, helps the body fight yeast infections.

Good fats play a role in hormone regulation as well. All steroidal hormones are built from cholesterol. Cholesterol is used to carry fatty acids from the liver to the cells and back again. Low cholesterol levels can result in low energy, depression and a loss of sex drive, as well as increased inflammation, lowered immune response and increased risk of stroke.

Finally, healthy fats provide fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E and K). These vitamins keep fats from oxidizing (turning rancid) and do the same thing in the human body. They protect fatty tissues like the brain from damage. They also build immunity, making the body more resistant to infections. They are also essential for the mineralization of bones and teeth.

There are more reasons why the body needs fats, but you should get the picture by now. You need the right kind of fats if you want to be healthy. So, the question arises, "Why have the facts about fat been so obscured?"

Obscuring the Truth About Fats

The answer is simple—profits. Real foods spoil, but refined foods have a long shelf life. If you've been taught and believe that shelf-stable refined foods are healthy you'll have no worries about buying and eating them.

But the truth is that there is a big difference between nutritionally-dense natural foods and nutritionally-deficient processed foods.

Much of the popular advice on nutrition simply doesn't take this into account.

Take carbohydrates as an example. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes all contain significant amounts of carbohydrates, but they also contain vitamins, minerals, fiber and other phytochemicals the body needs to utilize them properly. In contrast, refined sugar, high fructose corn syrup, white flour and other processed carbohydrates are empty calories, because they do not supply the rest of these nutrients.

Recognizing that processed carbohydrates are unhealthy doesn't mean that carbohydrates from fruits and vegetables are unhealthy as well. The same is true for fats and oils. Natural fats found in foods like dairy, eggs, meat and nuts are also nutritionally-dense. They supply your body with fat soluble vitamins, minerals, proteins and other nutrients it needs. They are healthy foods because they are whole. It is the processed or refined fats that are unhealthy, specifically margarine, shortening, partially hydrogenated vegetable oils and refined vegetable oils.

Making Processed Fats and Oils



The process of making refined fats and oils is not unlike making refined sugar from sugar cane or white flour from whole wheat. It takes a nourishing whole food and turns it into a lifeless, empty-calorie food.

When high heat is applied to any unsaturated fat, free radicals and trans-fatty acids are formed. Even though many refined oils say cold-pressed or expeller-pressed, the extraction process (pressing) often heats the oil to a high temperature from the mechanical action of the extractor. That's why cold-pressed doesn't mean the oil hasn't been subjected to heat. Where high heat isn't applied, chemicals are typically used in the extraction process.

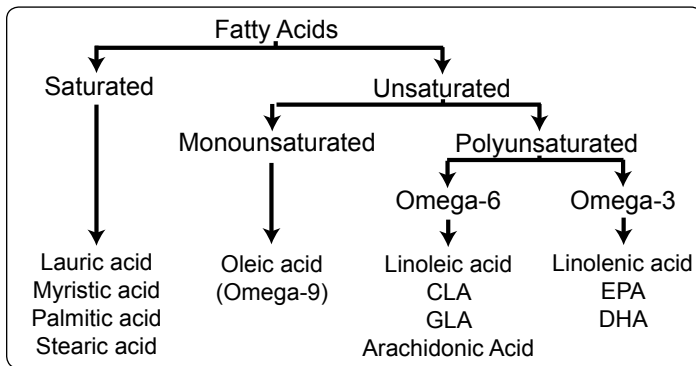
But, the problems with the extraction process are only the beginning. When an oil is partially hydrogenated (as many vegetable oils are), it not only creates more saturated fats, it also forms more harmful trans-fatty acids. Margarine and shortening both undergo a hydrogenation process, resulting in a very unnatural fat.

The alteration of the natural oils also involves degumming them to remove phospholipids like lecithin and minerals like iron, copper, calcium and magnesium. Sodium hydroxide is added to remove free fatty acids. Oils are then bleached and deodorized to remove betacarotene, aromatic oils (which give natural oils flavor and odor), and any remaining free fatty acids.

The bottom line is that modern vegetable oils, shortening and margarine are very shelf-stable, but lack the flavor and nutritional value of natural fats. Furthermore, their chemical structures have also become altered, causing harmful effects on human health.

Getting the Fats Your Body Needs

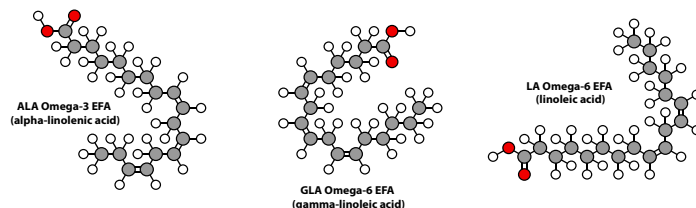
To understand fats and nutrition, let's start with a few basic facts. First of all, dietary fats and oils are triglycerides. This means that they consist of three fatty acids (tri-) attached to a molecule of glycerin (-glyceride). The fatty acids in triglycerides are long chains of carbon molecules with hydrogen atoms attached to them.



There are many different fatty acids, and they are classified two ways, first by how saturated hydrogen bonds on carbon atoms are and secondly by their length. Fatty acids can be short chain (4-6 carbon atoms), medium chain (8-12 carbon atoms) or long chain (14-18 carbon atoms).

As shown in the diagram above, these chains may be saturated or unsaturated. If all the carbon molecules in a fatty acid are attached to hydrogen molecules, the fat is saturated. Fatty acids that are unsaturated fatty acids can be monounsaturated, meaning only one carbon atom is not attached to hydrogen, or polyunsaturated, which means that two or more carbon atoms are not attached to hydrogen atoms.

Certain long chain polyunsaturated fatty acids must be obtained from the diet and have been given the name, essential fatty acids (EFAs). They are classified as either omega-6 or omega-3 EFAs based on where the first unsaturated bonds are.



Essential Fatty Acids

Polyunsaturated fatty acids, like those illustrated above, are essential to health. They must come from the food you eat, or from supplements. They are necessary for the health of cell membranes, brain and nervous tissue, immune function, circulation and more.

Your body needs both omega-6 and omega-3 EFAs and in the right ratio. Nutritional experts believe that the ratio of essential fatty acids should be somewhere between 2 to 7 parts omega-6 to 1 omega-3 (2:1 to 7:1). For most Americans, the ratio is about 15:1 to 17:1 because most vegetable oils (used in prepared and fried foods) are high in omega-6 and low in omega-3. Two oils that have a good ratio of essential fatty acids are **flax seed oil** and hemp seed oil.

The higher ratios found in Western diets are contributing factors to many diseases, including cardiovascular disease, cancer, inflammatory diseases and autoimmune diseases. Research has found low-

Additional Help and Information

For more information about healthy fats contact the person who gave you this newsletter. You can also consult the following resources:

- Know Your Fats* by Mary G. Enig, PhD.
- The Fat Fallacy* by William Glower
- Healthy Fats for Life* by Lorna R. Vanderhaeghe and Karlense Karst

ering this ratio has proven helpful in many diseases. And it suggests that a 4:1 ratio is associated with a 70% decrease in total mortality from heart disease. A ratio of 2.5:1 reduced cell proliferation in colorectal cancer patients. A ratio of 2-3:1 suppressed inflammation cases of rheumatoid arthritis. A 5:1 ratio helped people with asthma. ["The importance of the ratio of omega-6/omega-3 essential fatty acids" by A.P. Simopoulos (Biomed Pharmacother. 2002 Oct;56(8):365-79)]

So, for optimal health, most Americans need to reduce their intake of vegetable oils and increase their intake of omega-3 essential fatty acids through dietary changes or supplements.

Omega-3 EFAs

The basic form of omega-3 is alpha linolenic acid (ALA), which is found in many plant foods such as flax, hemp, and pumpkin seeds, walnuts and avocados. In a healthy body ALA is converted into eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). In balance with omega-6 EFAs, the long chain omega-3 EFAs, EPA and DHA, are essential to a healthy brain and nervous system, a functioning immune system and a healthy cardiovascular system.



You can obtain these longer chain omega-3 EFAs from animal foods like deep ocean fish (e.g. mackerel, sardines, anchovies, albacore tuna) and wild (not farm-raised) salmon. They are also present in grass-fed meat and dairy foods. Many people have found they can reduce inflammation and pain, improve circulation and brain function and enjoy better overall health by taking an **Omega-3 Supplement** containing EFA and DHA.

The Value of DHA

A **DHA Supplement** may also be beneficial for many people. DHA is the most abundant fatty acid in the brain and is essential for the myelin sheath. Supplementing with DHA may be helpful for improving memory, easing neuralgia and treating multiple sclerosis (MS). DHA is also the major fatty acid in the retina and can promote better eye health as people age.

DHA is especially important for the developing brains of children. Omega-3 EFAs in general, and DHA in particular, have been shown to enhance brain intelligence in children and help correct behavior problems such as ADHD.

GLA: An Important Omega-6 EFA

The basic omega-6 EFA is linoleic acid, which is converted into gamma-linolenic acid (GLA) in a healthy body. Oils rich in GLA include evening primrose oil, borage oil and black currant oil. These oils contain a good ratio of omega-6 and omega-3 oils and taking a **GLA Supplement** containing these oils may be helpful in reducing inflammation, maintaining normal blood pressure and reducing blood clotting. Taken with **vitamin B6** and **magnesium**, a GLA Supplement can also help reduce PMS symptoms like breast swelling and tenderness.

Medium Chain Saturated Fats

Most people think that saturated fats are bad for you, but the medium chain saturated fats found in coconut oil and butter are very beneficial to both the heart and the immune system. Coconut

Continued on page 4

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AskMara.com & Energy Wellness Products

Mara Gerke

9898 N 200 E, Decatur, IN 46733

Phone: 800-728-2425

Website: <http://www.askmara.com/>

Email: askmara@gmail.com



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Continued from page 3

oil is one of the best oils for frying and contains caprylic acid, a fatty acid that helps fight yeast in the colon.

Fat Soluble Vitamins

Fat soluble vitamins are a critical component to good health and are often missing in modern diets, especially low-fat diets. Dr. Weston Price healed people of many ailments by giving them cod liver oil (fish oil), which is a good source of omega-3 EFAs and is also high in vitamins A and D, and butter from cows fed on grass in the early spring. Butter is high in medium chain saturated fats that aid the immune system, as well as vitamins A and D. He said that this early spring butter contained an unknown vitamin that aided the health of bones and teeth. Modern researchers now believe he was referring to vitamin K2.

Many people can benefit from supplementing with fat soluble vitamins in addition to omega-3 EFAs. The following are the fat soluble vitamins and some of their benefits.

Vitamin D

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium, which is essential for the health of bones and teeth. It strengthens the body's immune system, reducing wintertime illness and cancer risk. It also helps



to improve mood and reduce the risk of heart disease. Vitamin D is formed from cholesterol when skin is exposed to sunlight. Since the majority of people spend their time indoors, especially in winter months, research suggests that 70-80% of the people in North America are deficient in vitamin D.

The most active form is **vitamin D3** and most people will benefit from taking vitamin D3, especially during the winter months. The latest guidelines suggest that the average adult needs between 2,000 to 3,000 mg. of vitamin D per day. People who might need even more than this include breast-feeding mothers, seniors, those with dark skin, patients suffering from liver disease, cystic fibrosis, hardening of the arteries, cancer, Crohn's disease, the obese and those who have had gastric bypass surgery.

Vitamin A

The precursors to vitamin A are carotenoids, found in plant foods like carrots and dark green, leafy vegetables. These must be converted into the active forms of the vitamin known as retinoids. Retinoids are found only in animal foods. Good sources include liver, eggs, fish liver oils and whole milk dairy products.

Vitamin A protects cells from the damaging effects of free radicals and also helps to counteract the effects of radiation, tobacco smoke and pollutants. It especially helps protect the sensitive tissues of the eye from damaging UV radiation, which is why folklore says carrots are good for your eyes. Vitamin A plays a role in the immune system by helping to protect cells from bacterial infection. It also has roles in bone growth, reproduction and cellular functions.

Vegetarians, young children, and alcoholics may need extra Vitamin A. It's a good idea to take a **Vitamin A&D Supplement** during the cold and flu season as they help to ward off acute illness.

Vitamin E

Like vitamins A and D, **vitamin E** is a fat-soluble vitamin and has antioxidant benefits that prevent cholesterol and other fats from oxidizing. Besides its antioxidant benefits, vitamin E is an anticoagulant, antithrombotic and cicatrisant. This means that it helps to prevent blood clots from forming in the circulatory system, thus inhibiting thrombosis, heart attacks and stroke. It also helps wounds to heal without scarring.



The oil in whole wheat contains vitamin E, but it deteriorates within a few days after wheat is ground. Many people benefit from taking vitamin E to aid circulation, but it should be used with caution if a person is on a blood thinner.

Vitamin K

Vitamin K is best known for making proteins for blood clotting. Vitamin K (particularly vitamin K2) is also helpful for cardiac health and for healthy bones, especially when taken along with vitamin D3. A **Krill Oil Supplement** with vitamin K2 will also supply omega-3 EFAs.