Navigating the Supermarket: Healthy Fats

Use this guide to find the most nutritious choices at the supermarket.

Nuts, Seeds, and Avocados
Nuts, seeds, and avocados are excellent sources of vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, and heart healthy fats. They are very calorie dense, however, so eat them in moderation. Choose unsalted, dry-roasted nuts and seeds to cut down on fat and sodium.

Enjoy a wide variety of nuts and seeds because they all contain different nutrients. Scan through the lists below and check off your favorites or the varieties that you have never tried. Make an effort to incorporate them into your diet regularly.

- Almonds
- Flaxseed
- Pecans
- Pumpkin seeds
- Brazil nuts
- Peanut butter
- Pistachios
- Sesame seeds
- Cashews
- Peanuts
- Poppy seeds
- Walnuts

Fat & Oils
Not all fats are created equal. Some fats, such as saturated and trans fat, increase cholesterol and the risk of heart disease. Other fats, such as monounsaturated and omega-3 fats, can decrease cholesterol and protect the heart. Remember that even healthy fats are high in calories so use them sparingly.

Plant Oils. Choose fats that are high in monounsaturated fat and polyunsaturated fat such as olive, canola, safflower, corn, sesame, sunflower, and soybean oil. Limit or avoid coconut oil, palm kernel oil, and palm oil because they contain large amounts of saturated fats.

Stick margarine and butter. Margarine, especially stick margarine, contains trans fats. Butter is high in saturated fat. Both should be used sparingly, if at all.

By: Kelly Frazier, M.A., ACSM, Furman University. Sources: American Heart Association, Mayo Clinic, Harvard School of Public Health, and Food and Drug Administration.
Navigating the Supermarket (continued)

Tub margarine and butter. Choose a tub margarine that does not contain partially hydrogenated oil or trans fat, such as Fleischmann’s Olive Oil Spread, Brummel ’n Brown, or Land ’o Lakes Light Butter with Canola Oil.

Cholesterol lowering spreads. Some spreads, such as Benecol and Take Control, have plant stanols and sterols which may help reduce your cholesterol.

Non-stick cooking sprays. Nonstick sprays, such as Pam, typically contain a heart healthy vegetable oil and a propellant to pressure it out of the can. Use them to coat baking dishes or omelet pans to prevent foods from sticking.

Condiments. Lower fat varieties of condiments such as salad dressing and mayonnaise can help you cut back on calories and fat. If you choose to use the full fat versions, use them sparingly.

How can I choose healthier fats?
Make the switch! Switch from butter to olive oil, canola oil, or non-hydrogenated tub margarine.

Get sprinkling! Sprinkle slivered nuts or sunflower seeds on salads instead of bacon bits.

Stir ’em up! Add roasted pine nuts or almonds to a favorite vegetable such as green beans.

Toss ’em in! Add cashews to your stir-fry instead of chicken or beef.

Spread ’em on! Make a sandwich with natural nut butter instead of roast beef.

Snack on them! Snack on a handful of nuts rather than on candy.

By: Kelly Frazier, M.A., ACSM, Furman University. Sources: American Heart Association, Mayo Clinic, Harvard School of Public Health, and Food and Drug Administration.
Navigating the Supermarket (continued)

**Added Fats: How do they compare?**
Before you butter your bread or sauté your vegetables, see how different fats compare. Notice that all fats are high in calories. Cup for cup, heart-healthy oils actually have more fat and calories than less-healthy butter, margarine, or shortening. The difference is in the type of fat that they contain. Notice that olive oil and canola oil are better choices because they are lower in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Butter, stick (1 cup)</th>
<th>Margarine, stick (1 cup)</th>
<th>Shortening (1 cup)</th>
<th>Olive Oil (1 cup)</th>
<th>Canola Oil (1 cup)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>1721</td>
<td>1611</td>
<td>1760</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat (g)</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated fat (g)</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans fat (g)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cholesterol (g)</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nuts and candy: How do they compare?**
Before your next snack attack, see how a handful of M&Ms compares to a handful of almonds. Notice that they are both high in fat and calories. Almonds contain much less saturated fat and sugar and more protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almonds, dry roasted, ¼ cup</th>
<th>Milk Chocolate M&amp;Ms, ¼ cup</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calories</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat (g)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated fat (g)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein (g)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar (g)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phosphorous (mg)</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potassium (mg)</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin E (mg)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>