



Fat Can Be Heart Healthy

Background for Facilitators

- [Tufts Health and Nutrition Letter: Why Low-fat Diet Failed](#)
- [Mayo Clinic: Dietary Fats, Which Ones to Choose](#)
- [FDA: New Nutrition Facts Label](#)
- [FDA: Using the Nutrition Facts Label: Older Adults](#)
- FDA: An optional handout on saturated fats from FDA is provided at the end of this guide.
- [Seafood Nutrition Partnership](#)

Use the Nutrition Facts Label to choose foods with less saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars. Most older adults get too much of these nutrients.

Behavior Goals

Participants will:

1. Differentiate foods with saturated fat and foods with unsaturated fats.
2. Identify one food associated with the Mediterranean style of eating, to eat more often.
3. Understand why physical activity lowers your cardiovascular disease risk.

Meeting Preparation

1. Review the newsletter. Send questions or concerns to your coordinators.
2. Review background resources (website links are provided above).
3. Choose one of the recipe options. Make the recipe at least once before the meeting. Write down helpful hints for the group. (*continued on page 2*)
4. Determine how to transport and taste featured food tasting.
5. Prepare large white board with 2 columns (Foods with Saturated Fat, Foods with Monounsaturated and Polyunsaturated Fats).

Props

- Display a variety of cooking oils, margarine, butter and all-vegetable shortening in a can
- T/F sticks

! The suggested wording for the presentation is in regular font and the **facilitator directions are in bold, dark red italic**. It's best not to read the presentation, but to use your own words, staying close to the meaning.

Conversation

Last time we talked a lot about sedentary behaviors. As we enter colder months it gets harder for us to get outside and be active. Did anyone start any new exercises or ways to be active last month?

Introduction

This is the 4th and final in our series focused on cardiovascular health. Today we are going to learn how to find foods with heart-healthy fats that we can eat every day.

But first, let's play a game to test your knowledge about fats. ***Have participants use T/F sticks.***

True/False

T/F: The amount of fat you eat is not as important as the type of fat you eat.

- True. ***Refer to page 1 of the newsletter for advisory from the American Heart Association.***

T/F: Saturated fats, found in animal products, decrease your cholesterol.

- False. ***Refer to page 1 of the newsletter for a statement regarding saturated fats.***

T/F: Canola Oil is a useful oil for cooking.

- True. ***This is because it has a high smoke point and it is relatively inexpensive.***

T/F: If an oil is labeled as “vegetable oil,” it is likely made from corn.

- False. ***If it is labeled as “vegetable oil,” it is most likely made from soybeans.***

Nutrition Discussion

For many years you heard that fat was not good for you, and fat-free versions of all sorts of foods, including muffins and salad dressing, were marketed as a healthy choice. ***For just a few moments, allow the group to reflect on fat-free products that first emerged on the market. They'll likely remember ones they really didn't like. 😊***

Eating a fat-free diet is no longer the goal. Fats are not all the same—and some are good for your cardiovascular system. Current research-based recommendations tell us to shift our choices from foods rich in saturated foods to foods with unsaturated foods. The information on the first page of the newsletter can help you sort this out. ***Invite the group to look over the chart on page 1. Are they familiar with the terms saturated, polyunsaturated and monounsaturated? Do the foods in each column make sense to them? What questions come to mind?***

Most of us need to eat fewer foods in the left column (***Foods high in saturated fat***) and shift to eating more of these foods on the right (***Foods high in unsaturated fat***).

Activity: The Nutrition Facts Label can help you make better choices.

Review information on page 2 of the newsletter.

- ***Pass out samples of cooking oils and containers of margarine, butter, all-vegetable shortening.***
- ***In pairs or small groups, compare information about fats on the labels.***
- ***Ask groups to share which products provide the most unsaturated fats and why they chose those items.***
- ***Depending on time, address questions that come up during the exercise.***

Tasting Activity

Option 1: Mediterranean Tuna Salad recipe from newsletter

Option 2: Jessica Levinson posted this easy tuna edamame salad

Option 3: Tuna salad with chickpeas from Seasoned Magazine

Option 4: Tuna taste-off (compare and taste a variety of canned tuna)

Option 5: Hummus taste-off; compare flavors of purchased hummus and/or homemade recipes (main ingredients include chickpeas, tahini and olive oil)

Teaching Tips for Tuna Salad:

Tuna

- Saturated fat is found in higher proportions in animal products and is usually solid at room temperature. An exception is seafood, which is generally low in saturated fat.
- The human body makes all the saturated fat that it needs, so it's not necessary to get saturated fat from food.
- This recipe calls for albacore tuna but can use any canned tuna. Albacore has the highest levels of omega 3s (healthy fats in fish) compared to other varieties of tuna.
- If you want even more unsaturated fats, look for tuna packed in vegetable oil like safflower or olive oils.

Chickpeas

- Want less sodium? Drain and rinse chickpeas.
- They're a great source of inexpensive protein and the main ingredient in hummus.
- Have leftovers? Toss them into almost any soup or salad.

Be creative!

- This “creation” doesn’t need any measuring utensils.
- Use mayo in place of the olive oil dressing.
- Enjoy on a bed of lettuce, on a pita, or with sandwich bread.

Crunchy veggies add nutrition, flavor and texture

- Brainstorm other vegetables to use with canned fish.
- Be sure to wash your fresh produce thoroughly with water but not soap.

Physical Activity

Imagine that tomorrow you’ve been given a magical gift. You have 24 hours to do whatever activity you want and you are in the best physical condition of your life. What would you choose to do and why? How do you think you would feel at the end of the day? ***Allow time to share reflections. (They may say they would feel energetic, youthful, happy, full of life, successful, etc.)***

It’s important to believe that you can still experience the good feelings that come from being active. It’s also important to stay active for your heart and cardiovascular system.

Let’s take a look at the article, Exercise Your Heart, on page 3. In addition to how good exercise can make you feel, what are some of the health benefits from exercising our heart? ***Helps you manage blood pressure, improve endurance, and maintain higher levels of HDL.***

Take Action

In the “Be active. Take action!” section, note activities you want to do more often to strengthen your heart muscle. As always, check with your doctor if you have any concerns about physical activity. Ideas to offer, if needed:

- Dancing
- Hiking
- Bicycling
- Walking
- Golf (not using a cart)
- Downhill skiing
- Cross-country skiing
- Tennis
- Softball
- Swimming
- Gardening
- Yard work
- Stair climbing
- Jogging

Choose heart-healthy fats more often (page 4):

Think about the different sources of fat you eat. If you want to choose healthier fats more often, write down one way you plan to do this starting tomorrow.

Ask for two volunteers who are willing to share one or both of their action steps. Help them think about details that will help them be successful (what, when, where, how often, how much, etc.)



FRESH CONVERSATIONS



What is the conversation about?

This Month's Conversations

- What is a healthy fat?
- Go Mediterranean!
- Makeover your tuna salad recipe

When?

Where?

Contact:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Iowa Nutrition Network
Iowa Department of Public Health
(515) 281-6047

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Information & resources for seniors with home & family questions
ISU AnswerLine 1-800-262-3804