

Although it has been proven to increase the risk of heart disease, trans fat isn't always listed on food labels. The average Canadian consumes 10 grams of trans fat each day, more than 9 grams coming from margarine, commercial baked goods, packaged snacks, and fried fast food.

## What is trans fat?

Most trans fat is formed when a natural vegetable oil is hardened through hydrogenation. This changes the liquid into a solid and alters the shape of the fatty acid. Hydrogenation is commonly used to extend the shelf life and improve the taste of certain foods, but the process also makes healthy oils unhealthy.

## How bad is it?

Eating just one gram of trans fat a day - that's one store-bought cookie - can, over a couple of decades, increase your risk of heart disease by 20 per cent. Studies have also linked trans fat consumption with an increased risk of Alzheimer's disease, and type 2 diabetes in women.

## Don't panic!

In an ideal world, we would swear off trans fats altogether. But for most of us, that's not realistic. Nutritionists suggest keeping both saturated and trans fats to a minimum. Health Canada recommends keeping your combined daily intake of saturated and trans fats to less than 10 per cent of your total caloric intake.

## CU Healthy

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- Resource Centre
- Student Peer Interns
- Health Promotion Advisory Committee
- Website ([carleton.ca/health](http://carleton.ca/health))
- Facebook page
- Newsletters, class presentations, workshops and more . . .

The Health Promotion Team promotes healthy lifestyles and wellness and can provide you with information about stress, colds, nutrition, sexuality, alcohol, etc. Contact the Resource Centre for more information at 613-520-2600 ext. 6544 or [cu\\_healthy@carleton.ca](mailto:cu_healthy@carleton.ca).



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# Trans Fat



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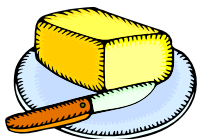
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# Fighting Trans Fat

## STICK MARGARINE

About 20 per cent of the trans fat we eat comes from margarine alone. But not just any kind - it's the firm, butter-style product that's the problem. The harder the margarine, the more trans fat it is likely to contain. One tablespoon (15 ml) of stick margarine can have up to 3.5 grams of trans fat.

**The alternative:** Choose soft, non-hydrogenated margarine such as Becel.



## VEGETABLE SHORTENING

Most shortening is hydrogenated. One tablespoon (15 ml) of solid vegetable shortening can contain up to 4.2 grams of trans fat.

**The alternative:** Look for recipes that call for margarine (and use a soft non-hydrogenated type) or oil (canola is the best choice).



## BAKED GOODS

Three cookies can hold up to 2.7 grams of trans fat. Beware of commercially prepared cake mixes, muffins, croissants, Danishes,

and pies. They routinely contain high amounts of trans fat, too. Steer clear of doughnuts altogether. One honey dip contains 3.7 grams.

**The alternative:** Look for cookies which advertise trans fat free brands, and bake muffins, cakes, and pies at home whenever you can.

## FAST FOODS

A medium order of french fries has almost eight grams of trans fat. Another trap: breaded fast foods such as fried chicken or chicken strips.

## FROZEN FOOD

They make dinner easy, but frozen foods such as breaded fish fillets can contain about 2.5 grams of trans fat. Breakfast waffles aren't much healthier, since many contain hydrogenated oils.

**The alternative:** Buy raw fish without breading and bake it yourself.

## CRACKERS

A single serving of crackers can have up to 2.5 grams of trans fat.

**The alternative:** Reach for crisp breads or snack breads that are trans fat free.

## POTATO CHIPS

A small bag of chips can house up to 3.2 grams of trans fat.

**The alternative:** Snack on nutrient-rich nibbles such as almonds or trail mix.

## MICROWAVE POPCORN

Often touted as the healthy alternative to potato chips, two cups (500 ml) of microwave popcorn hold about 2.2 grams of trans fat.

**The alternative:** Pop your own corn in a hot-air popper or in a pot on the stove using heart-healthy canola oil.



## READING THE LABEL

Health Canada's new labelling regulations requires all food manufacturers to list trans fat separately on their product labels. The government began enforcing this regulation in January 2006. However, you can still check for trans fat yourself by:

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 can (8 fl oz)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 50
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 6g	<b>9%</b>
Saturated Fat 0.5g	<b>3%</b>
<b>Cholesterol</b> <5mg	<b>&lt;2%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 200mg	<b>8%</b>
<b>Potassium</b> 370mg	<b>11%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 40g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 0g	<b>0%</b>
Sugars 18g	
<b>Protein</b> 9g	<b>18%</b>
Vitamin A 25% • Vitamin C 50% • Calcium 30% • Iron 25%	
*Percent Daily Values based on a 2,000 Calorie diet.	

**Checking the Package:** If you find the words "hydrogenated" or "partially hydrogenated oils," the product contains trans fat. "Shortening" and even the word "modified" can indicate the product contains trans fat as well. The higher up these ingredients are on the list, the greater the quantity in the product.

**Doing the Math:** Add the grams of saturated, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats listed on the label. Subtract this number from the total fat in the product. The remainder is an estimate of trans fat, in grams.