

Wellness with Parkinson's



Health Fat Choices



Fats are a necessary part of our diet. Fats are divided into three types of naturally occurring fats: as saturated fats, monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats. Trans-fats are used in processed foods and are an artificially produced fat used by food manufacturers to increase the shelf-life and solid nature of fats.

Saturated fat: these fats are solid at room temperature and are found primarily in red meat, tropical oils such as coconut, and dairy. A diet high in saturated fats can increase cholesterol levels.

- Reduce fatty meats. Eat meat 2-3 times a week and use vegetable proteins such as beans and lentils instead.
- Select nonfat dairy products.
- Use olive oil in place of butter

Monounsaturated fats are liquid at room temperature but get cloudy when refrigerated. Examples of monounsaturated fats include olives and olive oil, canola oil, nuts, and avocado. These oils are a better substitute for saturated fats and can reduce cholesterol levels and improve insulin activity.

- Chose olive or canola oil instead of other vegetable oils.
- Avoid fatty fried foods

Polyunsaturated fats are liquid at room temperature. Polyunsaturated fats can be divided into 2 types, omega 6 and omega 3. Omega 6 fats include sunflower oil, safflower oil, corn oil, seeds and grains. Omega 6 fatty acids are an important part of the inflammation process in your body and therefore contribute to many disease processes associated with inflammation. Omega 3 fats

are found in walnuts, flax seed, pumpkin seeds and cold water fish such as salmon, tuna and sardines. Omega 3, important to brain cell function is the found in highest concentration in the brain! A diet high in omega 3 compared to omega 6 is associated with a reduced risk of heart disease, certain cancers, and asthma. The average American diet consumes too much omega 6 fats compared to omega 3 fats.

Recommendation Summary: Avoid trans-fats (read your food labels). Reduce your saturated fats by limiting the amount of red meat you eats to twice or less weekly. Choose low-fat milk and dairy products. Use olive oil for cooking and salad dressings instead of corn oil and other oils high in omega 3. Aim for 2 servings of cold water fish. Add a fish oil supplement if you do not eat a lot of fish or are worried about mercury and other toxins in fish. See Fish oil section for more details.