



Fact Sheet

Trim Trans Fat for Healthier School Meals

KEY ISSUES:

- Most Americans, including children, need to decrease their intake of *trans* fat according to the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- A high intake of *trans* fat, as well as saturated fat and cholesterol, may increase the risk of coronary heart disease.
- Schools should serve meals with little or no *trans* fat to help reduce this risk.

We know that fats and oils are a part of a healthful diet, but the type of fat makes a difference to heart health. Although a small amount of *trans* fat is found naturally in foods like meat, butter, and milk, most *trans* fat is formed when hydrogen is added to an oil to make a more solid fat like shortening or margarine. This process, called “hydrogenation,” increases shelf life and helps maintain the flavor and texture of foods.

You can reduce the amount of *trans* fat your students consume by eliminating products with *trans* fat or serving them less often. Check the Nutrition Facts labels and note the amount of “*trans* fat” listed just below “saturated fat.” Food manufacturers can show “0 grams of *trans* fat” if a serving contains less than 0.5 gram.

Easy ways to follow the 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*

| Nutrition Facts | |
|---|----------------------|
| Serving Size 1 slice (34g) | |
| Servings Per Container 108 | |
| Amount Per Serving | |
| Calories | 90 |
| | Calories from Fat 15 |
| | %Daily Value* |
| Total Fat | 1.5g 2% |
| Saturated Fat | 0g 0% |
| Trans Fat | 0g |
| Cholesterol | 0mg 0% |
| Sodium | 140mg 6% |
| Total Carbohydrate | 16g 5% |
| Dietary Fiber | 1g 0% |
| Sugars | 2g |
| Protein | 2g |
| Vitamin A | 0% • Vitamin C 0% |
| Calcium | 0% • Iron 6% |
| * Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. | |

Recipe for Success

- **Review your menus.** Serve foods with *trans* fat less often.
- **Check Nutrition Facts labels and ingredient lists on similar foods.** Choose the food with the lowest amount of *trans* fat. Review nutrition labels frequently, as manufacturers change products regularly. Foods that list “shortening” or “partially hydrogenated vegetable oil” as an ingredient may contain *trans* fat.
- **Talk with your current food vendors about new products with little or no *trans* fat.** Look for vendors that have eliminated or reduced *trans* fat in their products.

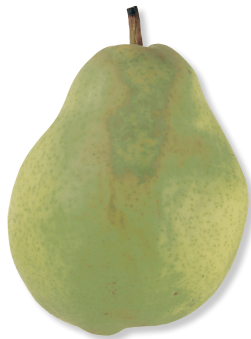




USDA Commodity Food Program

USDA eliminated trans fat from its frozen potato products and stopped offering solid shortening. For more information about USDA commodity products and updates on efforts to reduce trans fat in other popular products, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/schcnp/.

- **Write specifications for food products** with no *trans* fat.
- **Serve nonbreaded meat products**, which usually contain less *trans* fat than breaded products.
- **Offer fruits and vegetables** to satisfy kids' tastes for sweet and crunchy foods.
- **Discontinue the sale of á la carte snacks** containing *trans* fat such as certain types of cakes, cookies, and crackers.
- **Take the HealthierUS School Challenge!** Go for the Gold and offer meals that include more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, which are naturally low in *trans* fat!



For more information:

www.MyPyramid.gov
www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/transfat.html#whatis
www.cnpp.usda.gov/DietaryGuidelines.htm
www.teamnutrition.usda.gov/HealthierUS/index.html

Messages for Students

- Be "label able." Learn to read the Nutrition Facts label so you can make healthier food choices.
- For a fast and fun snack, grab nuts and fruits instead of cookies and chips.

Did You Know?

Processed foods and oils provide about 80 percent of *trans* fat in the diet, compared to about 20 percent that occur naturally in food from animal sources.

These categories of processed foods contribute to the 80 percent:

| | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 40% | cakes, cookies, crackers, pies, bread, etc. | |
| 17% | margarine | |
| 8% | fried potatoes | |
| 5% | potato chips, corn chips, popcorn | |
| 4% | household shortening | |
| 5% | other foods including breakfast cereal and candy | |



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