



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* fats may increase the risk of coronary heart disease.
- Schools should serve meals with little or no *trans* fats 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 8 fl oz		
Servings Per Container 8		
Amount Per Serving		
Calories	100	Calories from Fat 25
%Daily Value*		
Total Fat	2.5g	4 %
Saturated Fat	1.5g	8 %
Trans Fats	0g	0 %
Cholesterol	10mg	3 %
Sodium	125mg	5 %
Total Carbohydrate	12g	4 %
Dietary Fiber	0g	0 %
Sugars	11g	
Protein	8g	
Vitamin A	10%	Vitamin C 4%
Calcium	30%	Iron 0%

* 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* fats.





USDA Commodity Foods

USDA eliminated *trans* fats from its frozen potato products and stopped offering solid shortening. For more information about USDA commodity products, visit FNS' website: www.fns.usda.gov/fdd.

- **Talk with your current food vendors about new products** with little or no *trans* fat. Look for vendors that have eliminated or reduced *trans* fats in their products.
- **Write specifications** for food products with no *trans* fat.
- **Serve nonbreaded meat products**, which usually contain less *trans* fat than breaded products.
- **Serve fish often.** Most fish are lower in *trans* fat than other meats. Fish such as trout and salmon contain omega-3 fatty acids which may protect against coronary heart disease.
- **Offer fruits and vegetables** to satisfy kids' tastes for sweet and crunchy foods instead of cakes, cookies, and candy.
- **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:

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* fats in the diet, compared with 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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