



Understanding Trans Fats

Overview

Starting in 2006, the federal government will require that trans fats be listed on nutrition labels due to multiple research studies indicating these man-made fats may increase our risk for heart

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What are Trans Fats and Where Can They Be Found?

When hydrogen interacts with liquid oils, trans fats can form. They are mainly found in processed foods such as cookies, crackers, icing, certain types of margarine, and microwave popcorn. About 20 years ago, many manufacturers began using trans fats in order to stabilize their product to increase shelf life. Trans fats are also referred to as hydrogenated fats.

Identifying Foods That May Contain Trans Fats and Limiting Intake

- Review Food Labels – When reviewing the nutrition panel of foods, consume those labeled "hydrogenated" or "partially hydrogenated" canola, soybean or cottonseed oil less often. The listing order for hydrogenated fats is important. If it is listed first, second, or third, there is a large majority of trans fats in the food. When you buy processed foods,

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- Fried foods such as fish, chicken and fries
 - Cakes, pies, cake icing
 - Doughnuts and muffins
 - Canned biscuits
 - Pop Tarts
 - Microwave popcorn
- Choose Foods Naturally Low in Fat – When we choose foods that are closest to their natural state and naturally low in fat, they will probably have little or no trans fats. This includes fresh fruits and vegetables, lean proteins such as chicken breast, beans, whole grains and some cereals. Shopping the perimeter of the grocery store more than the interior will eliminate a large amount of processed foods from your shopping cart.