Dietary Fat

What counts as fat? Are some fats better than other fats? While fats are essential for normal body function, some fats are better for you than others. Trans fats, saturated fats and cholesterol are less healthy than polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats.

How much total dietary fat do I need?
The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 recommend that Americans:

- Consume less than 10% of calories from saturated fats.
- Replace solid fats with oils when possible.
- Limit foods that contain synthetic sources of trans fatty acids (such as hydrogenated oils), and keep total trans fatty acid consumption as low as possible.
- Eat fewer than 300 mg of dietary cholesterol per day.
- Reduce intake of calories from solid fats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Total Fat Limits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children ages 2 to 3</td>
<td>30% to 40% of total calories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children and adolescents ages 4 to 18</td>
<td>25% to 35% of total calories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults, ages 19 and older</td>
<td>20% to 35% of total calories</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Quick Q&A

If some fats are healthier than others, can I eat as much of these fats as I want?
No, it's best to keep your total fat intake between 20 and 35% of your total calories each day.

**Know your limits on fats.** You can meet this recommendation by following a healthy eating plan that meets your needs. [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/supertracker-tools/daily-food-plans.html) has personalized plans that will provide your daily allowance of oils and solid fats, based on your age, gender, height, weight, and physical activity level.

**More Information on Fats**

- [Trans Fat](http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/transfat.html)
- [Saturated Fat](http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/saturatedfat.html)
- [Cholesterol](http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/cholesterol.html)
- [Polyunsaturated Fats and Monounsaturated Fats](http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/fat/unsaturatedfat.html)