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Redeeming Unsaturated Fat

By Protica Research

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The most dreaded word in many dieter's vocabulary is 'fat'. It is not uncommon to hear a dieter discuss their avoidance of eating fat as if it were something thoroughly unwholesome, or even life-threatening, like an allergen, or a contagious disease.

In one way, this impassioned hatred of fat is positive. It reflects a generally understood medical truth that overindulging in fat-rich foods often causes unwanted, and unhealthy, weight gain.

However, in another way, this fat-phobia is potentially dangerous, because awareness of fat is not enough; an understanding of how fat influences weight gain and overall health is required.

Unfortunately, those who dread and avoid all fat "as a rule" are overlooking an important difference between saturated fat and unsaturated fat.

Saturated fat is often the real culprit when it comes to unwanted, and potentially unhealthy, weight gain. These types of fats, which are solid at room temperature, initiate the production of LDL cholesterol, or "bad cholesterol". In addition to weight gain, as cholesterol increases, so does the risk of heart disease. In fact, saturated fats increase LDL cholesterol disproportionately more than dietary cholesterol itself; that is how powerfully bad it is to the human body[i]. Dreading and avoiding this kind of fat is therefore quite intelligent.

Some dieters, however, are motivated less by concerns about high cholesterol and heart disease than they are about cosmetic weight gain. This is not a criticism; the adverse health effects of excess weight are well documented, as are the emotional traumas and social stigmas that tragically affect tens of millions of overweight people, especially children[ii].

Unquestionably, an excess intake of saturated fat is linked to weight gain. This is because a fat gram contains more than twice the amount of calories as a protein gram - 9 calories versus 4 calories[iii]. As a result, dieters can eat more than twice as many protein grams as fat grams to achieve the same amount of caloric intake. For dieters who are steadfastly watching every calorie, this 125% calorie difference between protein and fat can have an enormous impact.

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Fat cells, once created, cannot be removed[1]; they can only be made smaller through the body's metabolic calorie–burning process[iv]. Since an individual's rate of metabolism is determined largely by genetics, a dieter with a slower than average metabolism will spend months, perhaps even years longer struggling to shrink fat cells than would his or her metabolically–gifted counterpart[v].

It is quite easy to understand, based on the above discussion, why the very idea of fat is dreaded by dieters; both because of the health hazards it poses, and its capacity to create excess fat cells. And it is just as easy to understand why many people are so afraid of consuming this kind of fat that they strive to remove all fat from their diet. This, however, is a large nutritional oversight.

Fat is a macronutrient that the body requires for a number of important functions. Fat is a source of

energy. It helps keep the body warm, it aids in the absorption of some vitamins, and helps regulate the proper functioning of the brain and nervous system[vi]. This appears, however, to be a contradiction.

On the one hand there are health and weight gain hazards associated with fat, and on the other hand, there are proven health benefits associated with fat. How can this be? The answer is easily understood when we differentiate between the two types of fat: saturated and unsaturated. The kind of fat associated with health hazards is the former; the kind that the body needs and uses effectively is the latter.

There are two sub–types of unsaturated fat: polysaturated fat, and monosaturated fat. Popular foods that contain polysaturated fat include safflower oil and corn oil, while monosaturated fats are found in such foods as olive oil and peanut oil. These unsaturated fats are those that provide the body with the most useful and efficient sources of fat that lead to the health benefits noted above.

However, though there is a clear benefit to eating unsaturated fats instead of saturated fats, both types continue to offer eaters the standard 9 calories per gram. As such, no eater should consume an excess amount of fat.

Equipped with the awareness and understanding that avoiding saturated fat is hazardous to health, and that there is such a thing as "good" (unsaturated) fat, it would be expected that most nutritional supplements on the market have created foods that reflect this understanding. This is, regrettably, not the case.

Most nutritional supplements contain some fat content; many even contain saturated fat for some inexplicable reason[2]. Tragically - and there is no other word - many dieters are deceived into eating self–described nutritionally intelligent foods that may be "low calorie", and may even have some vitamins and nutrients, but they but they are adding to the individual's limited capacity to ingest fat grams. Many people who seek to lose weight by eating nutritional supplements often gain weight. They erroneously believe it is the result of a slow metabolism, when the culprit is the amount of fat grams ingested.

Fortunately, there are several fat–free food supplements on the market today. There are several important benefits of this strategy that benefit dieters of all sizes.

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The obvious benefit is that a dieter does not have to count fat calories when eating these nutritional supplements; they are 100% fat free, and do not add to their daily fat-intake limit.

Less obviously, however, is that a zero-fat nutritional supplement that contains protein can stimulate the digestive system and minimize fat storage. This is because the protein content can help regulate the body's ability to effectively absorb the calories that it derives from carbohydrates and fats. For example, a dieter who eats a sugary, fat-filled cupcake can mitigate fat storage and increase nutrient utilization by eating it with a protein-rich nutritional supplement.

The world of nutrition has long since known the link between dietary fat and weight gain. Unsaturated fat can be a trusted ally in the fight against weight loss. Understanding how it differs from saturated fat helps demystify the stigma of unsaturated fats - a stigma that should be reserved for its unhealthy cousin, saturated fats.

ABOUT PROTICA

Founded in 2001, Protica, Inc. is a nutritional research firm with offices in Lafayette Hill and Conshohocken, Pennsylvania. Protica manufactures capsulized foods, including Profect, a compact, hypoallergenic, ready-to-drink protein beverage containing zero carbohydrates and zero fat. Information on Protica is available at <http://www.protica.com>

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[1] Fat cells can be removed externally, through such methods as liposuction and stapling, but these so-called solutions carry their own brand of risks and consequences.

[2] Actually, the reason is usually because of taste.

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Go Nuts!

By Phil Satterfield

Nuts of all kinds (I am talking peanuts, cashews etc) have a mixed reputation. They are high in fat, but have no carbohydrates. Many people I know will not eat any type of nut because of their high fat content. Nuts have a very important role in a healthy weight loss plan.

First, the fat in nuts is 90% percent unsaturated, which means it helps keep your arteries clean of cholesterol. Remember saturated fats, make you fat and clog your veins, unsaturated fats only cause you to gain weight. Do not let that scare you off; we need some fats in our diet.

Second, nuts have of no carbohydrates or sugar, which means they do not cause any insulin release, which is associated with weight gain. They are also so a great source of protein, one of the best of any non-meat food.

Do not go over board, nuts do have a lot of calories. But they also stay with you along time. If you find you are hungry between meals, have your self a serving of nuts. Make sure to eat one serving, read the label.

They can keep you from being hungry, because they have a lot of fat and protein. They also do not trigger the body to release insulin, which can cause you to get hungry.

Do not eat more then one serving a day. Any type will do so eat which ones you like they all have the same basic nutrients. They will also help you lower your cholesterol, because of the high amount of unsaturated fats

I know they have some fat, but if your weight loss plan is good and you the nuts by them selves, with out any type of sugar you will be fine. Drink water or diet soda pop with them. If you are watching you sodium you may want to eat unsalted nuts, or talk about with your doctor.

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So, the next time your need a quick snack, grab a handful of cashews, almonds or peanuts and enjoy.

Phil Satterfield runs

a small, but quickly growing site, that is dedicated to providing

people with the information they need to develop their own weight loss plan. Visit

and sign up for a free newsletter and get a free weight loss guide. The site has many articles and links and is growing all the time.

Go Nuts!

What Good and Bad Fat can do to Your Health

A Simple Way To Understand Fats

Some Simple Advices about Diet to Fight Rheumatism and Chronic Inflammation

Misconceptions About Dietary Fats

Beat that Fat

Obesity and Weight Loss

30-Day Low Carb Diet 'Ketosis Plan'

Recipes from the Heartland

600 Recipes For Chili Lovers



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