Know Your Fats

Walking through the grocery store you can always find items that are advertised as “Fat Free” or “Low Fat.” These foods are a result of the low fat fad diet craze, where everyone hoped to lose weight or become healthier by avoiding all fats! **For your health, it is more important to focus on the type of fat, rather than the amount of fat in your diet.** The fats that negatively impact your health, and increase your risk for high cholesterol and heart disease are saturated and trans fats, and should be avoided! While good fats, such as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, should be included daily as they help your body to function optimally.

Four Major Types of Fats:

♥ = Health Promoting Fats

**Monounsaturated**
Olive oil, canola oil, peanut oil, sunflower oil, sesame oil, avocados, nuts, and peanut butter

**Polyunsaturated**
Soy bean oil, corn oil, safflower oil, walnuts, seeds, fatty fish, soy milk, and tofu

**Saturated**
Beef, lamb, pork, whole milk, butter, cheese, ice cream, palm oil, coconut oil, and lard

**Trans**
Store bought — pastries, muffins, cookies, and cakes; Packaged snacks— chips, crackers, candy bars, margarine, and fried foods

Friday, February 5, don’t just wear red for Stony Brook, wear RED to support heart health! Use this month to focus on you, and make heart-healthy lifestyle choices.

For more information please visit the American Heart Association ([http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/)) or the

**Salmon ♥ Tuna Fish ♥ Sardines**
**Olive Oil ♥ Walnuts ♥ Flax Seed**

The four most common types of fat on a nutrition label are: monounsaturated (health promoting), polyunsaturated (health promoting), Trans fats (disease causing), and saturated fats (disease causing).

Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats are important components of the diet. One type of polyunsaturated fat is omega-3 fatty acids, which are especially beneficial to your heart. Current Research suggests that Omega-3, found in some types of fatty fish, appear to decrease the risk of coronary artery disease. They may also protect against irregular heartbeat and help lower blood pressure levels.

Polyunsaturated Omega-3 fatty acids are an essential part of the diet, as the body cannot make them. Foods made up mostly of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are liquid at room temperature, such as olive oil, safflower oil, peanut oil and corn oil. Fish that are high in omega-3 fatty acids include salmon, tuna, trout, mackerel, sardines and herring. Plant sources of omega-3 fatty acids include flaxseed (ground), oils (canola, flaxseed, soybean), and nuts and other seeds (walnuts and sunflower seeds).

There are many benefits to including Omega-3 fats into your diet. They have an important role in hormone production, they help control inflammation of joints and the cardiovascular system, and may reduce your risk for heart disease, stroke, and arthritis! Current research suggests that Omega-3 fatty acids even can aid athletes in recovery after intense exercise by helping to reduce inflammation and muscle soreness!

The American Heart Association recommends that healthy adults eat fish at least twice a week to get enough Omega-3s. By increasing your intake of omega-3 fats you will reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease, while also promoting muscle recovery and the health of your skin and hair!

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