

# WHIse Choices

A newsletter for women of the WHI Extension Study who were in the Dietary Change part of the WHI Dietary Study



## Transitioning from *Trans* Fats

As you may have heard, food product labels are now required to list *trans* fats. Many food companies and restaurants are no longer using *trans* fats in their foods. Entire cities are even banning *trans* fats! As of July 2007, New York City will ban the use of *trans* fats in restaurants, bakeries, and food establishments. So — what are *trans* fats and what is all the commotion about?

*Trans* fats are polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fats that have a molecular shape similar to saturated fats. Research has shown that *trans* fats may raise low density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol and lower high density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol, which may increase the risk of heart disease.

A small amount of *trans* fat occurs naturally in animal and dairy products. However, the vast majority of *trans* fats in the U.S. diet have come from processed foods that were made with hydrogenated (hardened) vegetable fat. These foods have included breads, cakes, pastries, margarines, fried potatoes, popcorn, shortening, and salad dressings. Many food products have been reformulated and no longer have *trans* fats.

*Continued, p. 2*

### Navigating Food Labels: Nutrient and Health Claims

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) governs nutrient content and health claims. Below are some of the many claims related to dietary fats.

**Fat free.** Any time that a food label includes the term “fat free,” it means that the product contains trivial amount or no fat. Food products labeled fat-free may have up to 0.5 gram of fat per serving specified on the food label. A synonym for fat-free milk is skim.

#### Related Examples of “Free”:

- **Trans fat free.** Up to 0.5 grams of *trans* fat per serving specified on the food label. As of January 1, 2006, food products have been required to include information about the amount of *trans* fat.
- **Saturated fat free.** Up to 0.5 grams of saturated fat per serving.

**Low fat.** 3 grams or less total fat per serving.

#### Related Examples of “Low”:

- **Low saturated fat:** 1 gram or less saturated fat per serving.
- **Low cholesterol:** 20 mg or less and 2 grams or less of saturated fat per serving.
- **Low calorie:** 40 calories or less per serving. Foods that are fat-free, low-fat, or reduced fat are not necessarily low calorie.

**Reduced fat.** Food products nutritionally altered to contain at least 25% less fat.

#### Saturated fat, cholesterol, and *trans* fat.

“Diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol, and as low as possible in *trans* fat, may reduce the risk of heart disease.” The FDA approved this health claim as of Nov. 10, 2006 for foods meeting FDA definitions for low-saturated fat, low cholesterol, and containing less than 0.5 grams of *trans* fat.



## TRANSITIONING FROM TRANS FATS

*Continued from p. 1*

Intake of *trans* fats in the U.S. has been up to 2.6% of calories. The 2005 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommend limiting intake of *trans* fats. The American Heart Association also recommends reducing *trans* fats and goes on to suggest limiting intake to less than 1%. The results from the Women's Health Initiative showed a trend for lower risk of heart disease in Dietary Change group participants who had levels of *trans* fat less than 1.1% of calorie intake (see [www.whi.org](http://www.whi.org); 2/7/06 - Results from the Dietary Study). This finding suggests that the movement nationwide to limit the amount of *trans* fats in our food is a step in the right direction.

In this newsletter, you will have the opportunity to learn more about *trans* fats, look at possible sources of *trans* fats in your diet, and think about *trans* fats in your food choices.

### Sample Food Label



#### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 piece (60g)  
Servings Per Container: 10

#### Amount Per Serving

**Calories 60**   **Calories from Fat 27**

	% Daily Value*
<b>Total Fat</b> 3g	<b>5%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
<i>Trans</i> Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 15mg	<b>5%</b>

**Ingredients:** Whole Grains, Sugar, Vegetable Oil, Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil, Chocolate, Salt, Spices.

*\*Sooper Snacks is a fictitious product and fictitious food label.*



#### Question to Ponder:

- Are the nutrient and health claims correctly stated? (Hint: Look at the labeling claims listed in "Navigating Food Labels: Nutrient and Health Claims," p. 1. (Answer below.)

**Answer:** Yes, the nutrient and health claims are stated correctly. Even though food does have hydrogenated oil and thus *trans* fat, it has less than 0.5 grams of *trans* fat per serving and may be labeled *trans* fat free.



**INTERACTIVE SIDEBAR**

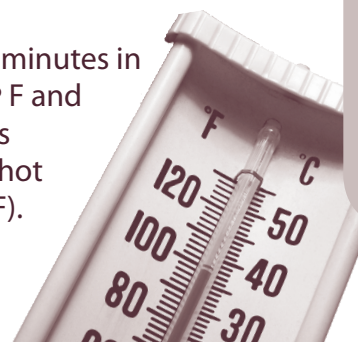


Look through your cabinets for foods labeled with any of the nutrient content claims or health claims listed in "Navigating Food Labels." After reading the food label, what thoughts do you have about that food product?

Food Label Information	Your Thoughts
Food:	
Claim:	
Total Fat Per Serving:	
Saturated Fat Per Serving:	
Trans Fat Per Serving:	
Food:	
Claim:	
Total Fat Per Serving:	
Saturated Fat Per Serving:	
Trans Fat Per Serving:	
Food:	
Claim:	
Total Fat Per Serving:	
Saturated Fat Per Serving:	
Trans Fat Per Serving:	

## Summer Food Safety

Did you know that bacteria can double in as little as 20 minutes in foods left in the temperature danger zone between 40° F and 140° F? Summer is often a time for outdoor celebrations involving food. Practice safe food handling by keeping hot foods hot (over 140° F) and cold foods cold (under 40° F).



*A reader from Pennsylvania requests: "I'd like some ideas about eating "low-carb" in addition to low-fat since carbohydrates are a menace for some of us."*

A very powerful tip for decreasing intake of carbohydrates is to watch portion sizes. Twenty years ago, a bagel was 3 inches in diameter and had 29 grams of carbohydrate. Today, a bagel is 6 inches in diameter, has 67 grams of carbohydrate and, for most women, fulfills a day's recommended intake of grains!



Choose fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains. These have carbohydrates and vitamins and minerals. Choose fewer foods with added sugars, such as sucrose (table sugar), corn syrup, and high fructose corn syrup. Sugars are also carbohydrates and thus have calories. Sugars are sometimes called "empty calories" because they do not have other nutrients, such as vitamins or minerals.

For more information about low-carbohydrate food choices, call the American Dietetic Association Consumer Nutrition Hotline toll-free at 800-366-1655.

## RECIPE

### Mexican Fruit & Vegetable Salad

1 whole pineapple, peeled  
1 small jicama, peeled and rinsed  
2 large carrots, peeled  
1 medium-size cucumber, peeled  
1 large firm-ripe papaya or mango  
Chile Lime Juice (recipe follows)  
fresh mint springs (optional)  
salt

Recipe reprinted from Session 2 of the WHI Dietary Modification Participant Manual as from *Sunset Mexican Cookbook*, copyright 1989, Sunset Publishing Corporation, Menlo Park, CA 94025

Cut pineapple crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick slices. Cut jicama into 1/4-inch slices. Cut carrots diagonally into 1/8-inch slices. Cut cucumber diagonally into 3 pieces. With a slender knife, cut out seeds, if desired. Then cut each cucumber diagonally into 1/4-inch slices. Peel papaya and cut in half lengthwise; then seed and cut crosswise into 1/4-inch slices. Group each food separately on a large platter. (At this point, you may cover and refrigerate for up to 4 hours.) Prepare Chile Lime Juice and pour over salad. Garnish with mint. Season to taste with salt.

**Chile Lime Juice:** Stem and seed a small serrano or jalapeno chile. In a blender, combine chile with 1/3 cup lime juice and 1/4 cup orange juice; whirl until pureed.

Makes 9 servings

Fat: 1 gram per serving

Fruit/Vegetable Servings: 3 per serving

Thank you for your participation in the WHI Extension Study.

## You are part of the answer!

**WHIse Choices** is produced quarterly by the WHI Coordinating Center at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. **Editors:** Lesley Tinker and Julie Hunt • **Design:** Sunny Bay Design

If you have questions or do not wish to receive *WHIse Choices* newsletters, please call the WHI Clinical Coordinating Center in Seattle, WA at this toll-free number: 1-800-218-8415.

**Letters ...** We'd love to hear your feedback on the newsletter and your story ideas. We regret that we cannot answer questions about individual medical conditions. Send a letter to:  
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