THE GOOD FATS WORKBOOK

A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL’S GUIDE TO IMPROVING CONSUMER CONFIDENCE IN DIETARY FAT
While it’s common knowledge for health experts to understand the differences in the types of dietary fats and the varying roles each plays in a healthy diet, lines become blurred when you take a closer look from the consumer point of view. Between contradicting headlines, “good” vs. “bad” designations and technical jargon that doesn’t match up to dietary recommendations, it’s understandably hard to keep it all straight. Consumers need help from trusted and knowledgeable health professionals.

In fact, when it comes to seeking advice on foods consumers should be eating, two out of three trust nutrition information from a registered dietitian! This workbook is designed to help you, the health professional, best guide your clients through the good and bad myths and facts about dietary fat and give clients the confidence and knowledge to make healthier food choices. Take a peek, walk through the guide with a client or share with a colleague and keep up the hard work in connecting the dots on dietary fats.

1. IFIC 2017 Food and Health Survey.
WHERE DO CONSUMERS STAND?

Consumers understand some, but not all, of the science-supported facts on dietary fat.2, 3

- **Saturated fats are, more or less, understood:** Although 9% of consumers think saturated fats are healthy, more than 60% are trying to cut back on foods higher in saturated fat.

- **Time and again, unsaturated fats are confusing:** In 2017, about 40% view unsaturated fats as healthy, and this stat is even lower for Millennials (33%). Data from 2016 also shows a barrier to consumption, with roughly one in four reporting they don’t know how to prepare foods with unsaturated fats.

- **Consumers are clear on omega-3:** Over 71% of consumers rate omega-3 fatty acids as healthy.

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2. IFIC 2017 Food and Health Survey.
3. IFIC 2016 Food and Health Survey.

ONLY 40% OF CONSUMERS VIEW UNSATURATED FATS AS HEALTHY
EXPERT TOOLBOX (Ask your clients)

WHAT WORDS OR FEELINGS COME TO MIND WHEN YOU HEAR “DIETARY FATS”?

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CAN YOU NAME THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF DIETARY FATS?

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DISCUSS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EACH TYPE:

Polyunsaturated fat: found in plant and animal foods, such as salmon, vegetable oils and some nuts and seeds. Polyunsaturated fats include omega-3 and omega-6 fats. Strong and consistent evidence shows that replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats, especially polyunsaturated fats, is associated with reduced blood levels of total cholesterol and of low-density lipoprotein-cholesterol (LDL-cholesterol).

Monounsaturated fat: found in plant foods, such as nuts, avocados and vegetable oils. Some evidence has shown that replacing saturated fats with plant sources of monounsaturated fats may be associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD).

Saturated fat: found in the greatest amounts in coconut, palm and palm kernel oils, and in animal fats and animal-derived products. These fats are often solid at room temperature. Evidence shows that replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats is associated with better heart-health outcomes.

Trans fat: found in some margarines, snack foods and prepared desserts. Individuals should limit intake of trans fats as much as possible by limiting foods that contain synthetic sources. A number of studies have observed an association between increased intake of trans fats and increased risk of CVD due, in part, to its LDL-cholesterol-raising effect.

WHICH FOODS DO YOU ASSOCIATE WITH EACH TYPE OF FAT?

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WHICH TYPES OF FAT DO YOU CONSIDER “HEALTHY”?

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HOW MUCH FAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY CONSUMING? ARE YOU TRYING TO INCREASE OR DECREASE YOUR CONSUMPTION OF ANY SPECIFIC TYPES?

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As trusted health advisors, you can help set the record straight for your clients by using an evidence-based approach. Scientific research continues to investigate the effects of foods that contain predominantly unsaturated fats, like avocados, nuts, olive oil and fish, on heart health, weight management, nutrient absorption and more. This growing body of evidence is helping us understand the role of dietary fats as part of a healthy diet.

We’ve summarized some of this research, including studies funded by the Hass Avocado Board, to help uncover the nutritional benefits of good fats for human health, particularly as it relates to fresh avocados.

**STUDY: THE EFFECT OF A MODERATE-FAT DIET WITH AND WITHOUT AVOCADOS ON LIPOPROTEIN PARTICLE NUMBER, SIZE AND SUBCLASSES IN OVERWEIGHT AND OBESE ADULTS—A RANDOMIZED, CONTROLLED TRIAL.**


**Key takeaway:** A moderate-fat diet that includes avocado may help reduce LDL cholesterol levels.

**STUDY DETAILS:***

**Who were the researchers?** Pennsylvania State University (PSU).

**Who were the participants?** 45 healthy overweight and obese men and women.

**What did they do?** Researchers investigated how including one fresh avocado in a moderate-fat diet (AV) would affect cholesterol levels compared to a calorie-matched moderate-fat (MF) or low-fat (LF) diet without avocado.

**What did they find?**

- **AV diet:** The AV diet (compared to MF/LF diet) significantly reduced total cholesterol and LDL “bad” cholesterol levels.
- **LF diet:** The LF diet (compared to MF/AV diets) increased triglycerides considerably and decreased HDL “good” cholesterol levels significantly more than the other diets.

TRANSLATING THE CURRENT SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE ON DIETARY FATS, CONT.

**What should I keep in mind?** The MF and AV diets were matched for calories and macronutrients, but not for fiber (26 grams MF versus 35 grams AV), phytosterols, carotenoids or other bioactives. Additionally, the AV diet included a whole avocado, more than a one-third serving.

**Where can I find more information?**
- Download the scientific summary: LoveOneToday.com/PSUStudy.
- Download related resources: LoveOneToday.com/AvocadoADay.

**Practical application:** Walk through an example of a “fat swap,” where you replace some of the saturated fats found in a meal with unsaturated fats. For example, using a fresh avocado salsa on top of fresh seafood or meat instead of a butter or cream sauce. See links on pages 9 and 10 for recipes.

**STUDY: ASSOCIATION OF SPECIFIC DIETARY FATS WITH TOTAL AND CAUSE-SPECIFIC MORTALITY**

**Key takeaway:** Replacing saturated fat and trans fat with unsaturated fat may help reduce risk of mortality.

**STUDY DETAILS:**

**Who were the researchers?** Harvard University.

**Who were the participants?** 126,233 healthy adults (83,349 women; 42,884 men).

**What did they do?** Researchers investigated dietary fat intake compared with mortality rates among participants of the Nurse’s Health Study and the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study.

**What did they find?**
- Participants with the highest intakes of saturated fats and trans fats were associated with increased risk of mortality, 8% and 13%, respectively.
- Participants with the highest intakes of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats were associated with reduced risk of mortality, 19% and 11%, respectively.
- Replacing 5% of energy from saturated fats with equivalent energy from polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats was associated with risk reductions in total mortality of 27% and 13%, respectively.

**What should I keep in mind?** Changes in health may result in changes in diet (reverse causation), and errors can occur with self-reported food and nutrient intake. As with all observational studies, causality cannot be established.

**Where can I find more information?**
- Read more about the science on dietary fats and consumer perception: LoveOneToday.com/DietaryFatResearch.
- Download related resource: LoveOneToday.com/AvocadoADay.

**Practical application:** Encourage clients to swap fats in their diets to emphasize more of the unsaturated variety. Fresh avocado can be used as a sandwich spread, salad dressing substitution or a delightful dip. See links on pages 9 and 10 for recipes.

TRANSLATING THE CURRENT SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE ON DIETARY FATS, CONT.

STUDY DETAILS:

Who were the researchers? PREDIMED Trial, a multicenter trial in Spain.

Who were the participants? 7,447 men and women, aged 55–80, with a high risk for CVD. From this group, 1,588 were excluded from the analysis because of irregularities in the randomization procedures.

What did they do? Researchers investigated the impact of three different diets on heart-health outcomes: a Mediterranean Diet supplemented with extra virgin olive oil (MedDiet EVOO), a Mediterranean Diet supplemented with mixed nuts (MedDiet Nuts) and a low-fat control diet (Control), which participants followed for nearly five years.

What did they find? The incidence of major cardiovascular events was lower among those assigned to a Mediterranean diet supplemented with extra-virgin olive oil or nuts than among those assigned to a reduced-fat diet.

What should I keep in mind? These findings cannot be generalized to a healthy U.S. population (those with lower cardiac risk), but they do provide strong support for the heart-health benefits of diets emphasizing monounsaturated fats, like the Mediterranean Diet.

Where can I find more information? Download the related resource at LoveOneToday.com/MediterraneanDiet.

Practical application: Although they are not native to Mediterranean countries, fresh avocados fit right in with a healthy Mediterranean-style eating pattern. Help your clients identify ways they can make their diets more Mediterranean, whether that means shifting to more plant-based proteins, adding avocado in place of saturated-fat-laden dips or spreads or choosing to cook with olive oil. See links on pages 9 and 10 for recipes.

STUDY: PRIMARY PREVENTION OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE WITH A MEDITERRANEAN DIET

Key takeaway: Dietary patterns that are high in monounsaturated fat, like the Mediterranean Diet, can be associated with positive cardiovascular health outcomes.

Key messages for clients:

- Not all fats are “bad.” There are “good” monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats that have been shown to support healthy cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) and the American Heart Association (AHA) recommend replacing “bad” saturated fats with “good” mono- and polyunsaturated varieties. Sources of good fat include extra virgin olive oil, nuts, fatty fish and avocados.

- Avocados are one of the only fresh fruits that provide “good” unsaturated fats to the diet. And as part of their unique package, they also provide a good source of fiber per one-third serving, which can help you feel fuller longer.

**ASK YOUR CLIENT: DID YOU KNOW SOME FAT-CONTAINING FOODS ARE HEART HEALTHY?**

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**REASSURE YOUR CLIENT: JUST BECAUSE A FOOD CONTAINS FAT DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN IT WILL CAUSE WEIGHT GAIN. ILLUSTRATE WITH EXAMPLES FROM RESEARCH.**

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**EMPOWER YOUR CLIENT: THERE ARE MANY SIMPLE, DELICIOUS AND NUTRITIOUS “GOOD” FAT FOOD OPTIONS THAT YOU CAN INCORPORATE INTO YOUR DIET. PROVIDE SPECIFIC FOOD EXAMPLES AND INGREDIENT SWAP IDEAS.**

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MAKING SMART SHIFTS FOR HEALTHIER DIETARY PATTERNS

Dietary fat plays a vital role in the diet. We’ve outlined only a small subset of the body of evidence exploring the impact of unsaturated fats in the diet and the potential benefits to be gained from including fresh avocados as part of a healthy eating plan. However, special attention must be given to the type and quantity of dietary fat consumed, and consumer confusion in this area represents an opportunity for health professionals to close the knowledge gap.

ENGAGE: Ask your client to list 10 foods containing fats. Then take it a step further and ask which foods in the list are known for their “good” unsaturated fats and how they would use them in place of saturated fats.

If your client needs help, use the list below to get the conversation going:
- **Nuts or nut butter:** predominantly unsaturated fats; use as a dip or spread.
- **Fresh avocados:** predominantly unsaturated fats; use as a dip or spread, smoothie ingredient or baking substitute.
- **Olive oil:** predominantly unsaturated fats; use to sauté vegetables or dress salads.
- **Homemade cookies or cakes:** predominantly saturated fats; substitute the butter 1:1 for avocado to reduce the saturated fat and boost the unsaturated fat.

ENJOY: Prepare our easy-to-follow Heart-Check certified recipes.

EDUCATE: Share client-ready resources like the Hass Avocado Board’s Healthy Meal Patterns handouts and the American Heart Association’s “Four Ways to Get Good Fats” infographic.
RECIPE INSPIRATION

Cook up something delicious at LoveOneToday.com/recipes.

NUTRITION INSPIRATION

Browse common client questions about fat, nutrition and weight management at LoveOneToday.com/Nutrition.

NUTRITION MATERIALS TOOLKIT

Download and print free educational handouts for you and your clients at LoveOneToday.com/HPResources.

AVOCADO GOODNESS COMMUNITY

Get helpful tips from our Avocado Goodness experts, and sign up for our health professional e-newsletter for even more avocado goodness delivered straight to your inbox at LoveOneToday.com/Avocado-Goodness.