

FOOD SMART

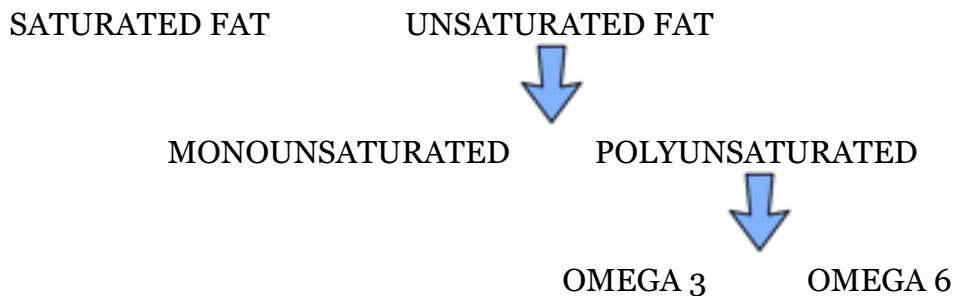
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Fat Facts

Protein is the building block the body uses to make muscle. It is also used to make skin and hair. The body's messengers are made from protein as well. Your body would not function without it.

Turkey is a better food to get protein from than steak because it only has about half as much total fat as beef or steak and one third as much saturated fat, in the same amount of meat! Food are chemicals, the kind we can eat. The different types of fat are grouped by what their chemical design or shape looks like under high power microscopes. Fat has space to hold hydrogen (trust me, hydrogen is a building block, and you will learn more about it in high school).

So what are saturated and unsaturated fat? The word "saturated" means full and "unsaturated" means not full. Saturated fat is filled with as many hydrogens as it can hold and is solid at room temperature. Unsaturated fat, the kind that is gel or liquid at room temperature, does not hold as many hydrogens as it can. There are two types of unsaturated fats. They are monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat. Polyunsaturated fat can be divided into two different fats. They are Omega 6 fat and Omega 3 fat. Both, the body needs and cannot make. So, they are called essential fats.



Saturated fat is often called, "bad fat" because it is a big risk factor for heart disease and stroke. They clog the arteries. They are found mainly in animal products such as cream, cheese, butter and red meat. This has been known for a while, but now it's becoming clear that saturated fat is also linked with certain types of cancer. Unsaturated fat is found in vegetable oils (corn, peanut, canola, olive...). These are the "good fats". They help keep the arteries unclogged.

Fish has no saturated fat, and chicken and turkey have much less than red meat. So, eat your protein and pay attention to the fat. Eat much less saturated than unsaturated fat.