

# Say No to Trans Fat!

## Tips & Information

### Real-life challenges...

- Kids seem reluctant to try new, healthy foods.
- Staff in charge of buying food don't know what ingredients to look for on labels.
- Staff don't see what they eat as relevant to their job or to children's healthy eating.
- We don't get to choose which foods are provided to children.

### ...and how to overcome them

- ⇒ Use taste tests to understand kids' preferences & identify new offerings to include on your menu.
- ⇒ Teach staff to avoid partially hydrogenated oils on nutrition labels—Take a look at the “Track the Trans Fat” lesson in **Food & Fun**. Then review vendor lists and order only foods without trans fats.
- ⇒ Teach staff about the importance of role modeling and involve them in taste testing.
- ⇒ Contact whoever is responsible for food purchasing and request that snacks be trans fat-free. Refer to **Snack Sense** for alternative snack options.

Think of this as an opportunity to review current menu items and try new things! Have you ever considered a field trip to your local grocery store? Wander the aisles and ask questions:

- Do those crackers contain partially hydrogenated oil?
- Is the 0g of trans fat on the cookie nutrition label accurate?

Ask kids about any healthy snacks they eat at home and have them bring in empty boxes to read the ingredient labels together.

### Check out some of these success stories!

One afterschool program was very excited about their success at eliminating trans fats from all their snacks. When they were ordering snacks, they carefully checked the nutrition facts to see that there were 0g of trans fats listed.

**BUT** one day a staff member noticed that there was partially hydrogenated oil listed in the ingredients of the crackers she thought were healthy. She'd heard that this is the name for trans fat oils. The staff member taught the staff and kids at her site the best way to look for trans fats on the label and helped her program ban trans fats for good!



# Did you know?

## The Truth About Fat

Did you know that the **type** of fat you eat is more important than the **total amount** of fat in your diet? Eating more good fats and less bad fats can reduce the risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes. **Making simple changes in food habits can make a big difference for health.**

- ★ Fats provide us with energy and vitamins that our body needs, but not all fats are created equal.

### UNSATURATED FATS — “Good Fats”

What: Oils found in plants and fish.

Where: Vegetable oils like olive and canola oil. Fish, nuts, seeds, peanut and other nut butters. Foods like olives, chick peas, and avocados.

### SATURATED FATS —

What: Fats found mostly in animal foods.

Where: Whole milk, cheese, butter, ice cream, red meat, sour cream, lard, coconut and palm oils.

### TRANS FATS —

What: Vegetable oils that are chemically changed to increase the shelf life of processed foods.

Where: Fast foods, packaged snacks (cookies, crackers, etc.), baked goods, and stick margarines.

## How can I tell if a product has trans fats?

- ◇ Trans fats are created from plant oils through a process called partial hydrogenation, which makes them solid at room temperature.
- ◇ Any time you see the words “partially hydrogenated” in an ingredient listing, it means that trans fats are present!
- ◇ Many manufacturers have started labeling their products with “No Trans Fats!” or “Zero Trans Fats!”, but the law says they can do this even when there are up 0.5g of trans fats in the product. **Read the ingredients instead!**

### Things to do in the kitchen:

- ★ Replace red meat with fish, chicken, nuts and seeds at meal times.
- ★ Cook with liquid oils (vegetable or olive) and trans fat-free tub margarine, instead of butter, shortening, stick margarine or lard.
- ★ Select dairy products made with 1% or non-fat milk, instead of whole or 2% milk.



## Want to know more? Check out these other resources.

BanTransFats.com, Inc is a nonprofit organization that has the goal of reducing and eliminating trans fats from all food products:

<http://www.bantransfat.com>

Harvard School of Public Health publishes an online nutrition news and resource center:

<http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/fats.html>

Planning healthy celebrations can be particularly challenging. Foodplay offers some great suggestions:

[http://www.foodplay.com/downloads/FreeMaterials/Teachers/celebration\\_guide.pdf](http://www.foodplay.com/downloads/FreeMaterials/Teachers/celebration_guide.pdf)

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