

WARREN COUNTY COMBINED HEALTH DISTRICT WEIGHT MANAGEMENT CLASS

FEBRUARY 26, 2018

FAT...BE MORE PARTICULAR!

Tonight I thought we'd talk about fat! (The dietary kind, that is!) This lesson is a repeat from last year, but from what I'm hearing during class, we need to talk about it again! Yes, the low-fat craze of the 70's and 80's, popularized again in the 90's by Dr. Dean Ornish (among others) has pretty much passed...still, fear and misconceptions about dietary fat remain. It's not that such concern is unwarranted; check out the food pictures I dug up for tonight! The thing that made the big difference in calorie content was FAT. Remember, there are three sources of calories (four, if you count alcohol). Carbohydrates and protein supply four calories per gram, alcohol; seven...and fat, NINE!!! Think about it-that's over twice the amount of calories of the first two. Yikes! That makes fat the fattest calorie there is, so some education and a lot of caution would certainly be in order!

Our bodies need some fat, it's true. Fat is a necessary part of a healthy diet. Besides (obviously!) being a great source of energy, fat also protects your organs and keeps you warm. Fats from food also are vital in helping your body absorb vitamins A, D, E and K.

The daily recommendation for fat is 20 – 35% of your calories. When you consume over that, the excess is stored for later use! Too much fat, as you already know, leads to all kinds of health problems: heart disease, stroke, diabetes and of course obesity. Although all fats do supply the same nine calories per gram, (over 100 calories per tablespoon!) that's where the similarities end. There are good fats and not-so-good fats!



THE GOOD	
Unsaturated Fat:	<i>These are the healthy superstars of the fat family! They hopefully make up the majority of your daily intake. They reduce bad cholesterol (LDL) and total cholesterol level, as well as your risk for heart disease and stroke.</i>
<i>Here's a breakdown of the two main types:</i>	
Monounsaturated Fat:	<i>These fats tend to be liquid at room temperature and solid when chilled. Oils in this family include olive, peanut, sesame, sunflower and canola oil. Foods rich in monounsaturated fats are avocados, nuts and seeds. In addition to the positive effect on cholesterol, monounsaturated fats are often high in vitamin E, a powerful antioxidant.</i>
Polyunsaturated Fats:	<i>These fats tend to be liquid at both room temperature and when chilled. They contain omega-3 and omega 6 fatty acids – nutrients essential to brain functioning and body development. Oils in this family include soybean, safflower and corn oil, and the best food sources of polyunsaturated fats are fatty fish like salmon, mackerel and trout.</i>
THE BAD	
Saturated Fat:	<i>Not only do foods high in saturated fat raise your cholesterol level, but these foods are often high in cholesterol themselves! The end result is like adding insult to injury-not only is your total cholesterol higher, but your “bad” cholesterol is higher, too. Red meat, full-fat dairy and tropical oils like coconut and palm tend to be the biggest culprits. Because high cholesterol is associated with heart disease and stroke, the American Heart Association recommends no more than 7% of your daily fat intake include saturated fat.</i>
THE UGLY	
Trans Fat:	<i>If you happen to be a food manufacturer or own a fast-food restaurant, trans fats are awesome! They are easy to come by, cheap to make, and have an extra-long shelf life. For the rest of us, though, it's a different story. Trans fats go a step further than saturated fats, as they not only raise your LDL (“bad”) cholesterol-they actually ALSO lower your HDL (“good”) level. BOO! Fried foods and commercially baked goods and also some snack foods (i.e. crackers, chips) often contain trans fat in the form of margarine and shortening. Any product labeled “hydrogenated” or “partially hydrogenated” contains trans fats, so read those labels! (By the way – if the print on the label is too small to read, you’ll notice that very often the label will say “No Trans Fat” in big, bold letters!) The AHA feels that no more than 1% of your daily fat intake should come from trans fat, which contributes to heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes. Do you remember which city banned trans fats in ALL their restaurants in 2006?</i>

When we do eat an excess amount of calories, (in the form of fat, or anything else) it will be stored. We don't start to burn this until we've exercised between 20 and 30 minutes, because our fat cells resist the release of stored fat. (And how awesome is that?!) Here's another little fun fact about fat...Our bodies are quite efficient at digesting and holding on to it. If we overeat calories in the form of carbs and/or protein, we'll also store them as fat; however this process requires burning a few calories. Fat, however, goes pretty much from the gut to the...rear end.

We know that fat cells are forever – but we do lose brain cells over time. From what I've told you, you can figure out that when you eat a diet high in fat you are feeding your fat cells. QUIT IT! Fat does happen to be the perfect fuel – it is compact and powerful, yet light in weight. It doesn't decompose with time. (But wouldn't that be cool if it did?! Just think – it disappears because it's past its expiration date!) Stored fat can actually feed the body for months in the absence of food. So for those of us who aren't competing on "Survivor", running a marathon, or fasting – pay closer attention!

SO...HOW DID YOU DO WITH "NO GRANOLA BARS" FOR THE LAST TWO WEEKS? OUR "NO!" FOOD FOR THE NEXT TWO WEEKS: ANYTHING FRIED!

SEE YOU MONDAY THE 12TH. THERE WILL BE NO CLASS NEXT MONDAY, MARCH 5TH.