

Healthy Fats

Fats are an essential part of our diet and are important for good health. People with cystic fibrosis (CF) have long been advised to follow a high fat diet to help meet increased energy needs and achieve a healthy weight.

Individuals with CF should try to choose nutritious foods and drinks to meet individual energy needs. Providing they are not overweight or at risk of becoming overweight or obese, fat intake in people with CF should not be restricted, however the source and quality of fat should be considered. Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats are preferred over saturated and trans fats because of their health benefits.

Polyunsaturated Fats

Polyunsaturated fats improve heart health and cholesterol.

Common sources include:

- Fatty fish (salmon, tuna, herring and sardines)
- Tahini (sesame and spread)
- Linseed (flaxseed) and chia seeds
- Soybean, sunflower, safflower, grapeseed and canola oil and margarine spreads made from these oils
- Pine nuts, walnuts, hazelnuts and brazil nuts

Monounsaturated fats

Monounsaturated fats are also beneficial to heart health. Common sources include:

- Avocados
- Almonds, cashews and peanuts
- Cooking oils made from plants or seeds like canola, olive, peanut, soybean, rice bran, sesame, sunflower oils

Saturated fats

Eating a lot of saturated fat increases bad cholesterol. Common sources include:

- Processed foods like biscuits, cakes and pastry
- Visible fat on meat and chicken
- Full-fat dairy products
- Some plant foods like palm and coconut oil

Despite being called a superfood, it is important to know that coconut oil contains 92% saturated fat. Therefore, it should only be used from time to time, and preferably in small amounts. For your main cooking, stick to healthier alternatives, namely olive and canola oil (Heart Foundation, 2017).

Trans fats

Trans fats are considered the least nutritionally beneficial source of fat. They have been shown to cause an increase in 'bad' cholesterol and a reduction in heart-friendly cholesterol. Common sources include:

- Deep-fried foods
- Baked foods like biscuits, cakes, pastries and buns

Useful Resources

- Nutrition for Adults Factsheet www.cfwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CF-Fact-Nutrition-for-Adults.pdf
- Nutrition for Children Factsheet www.cfwa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/CF-Fact-Nutrition-for-children.pdf
- CFFood www.cfwa.org.au/what-we-offer/resources
- CFCooking www.cfcooking.org
- The Heart Foundation www.heartfoundation.org.au

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Cystic Fibrosis WA

The Niche
11 Aberdare Rd
Nedlands WA 6009

Postal Address
PO Box 959
Nedlands 6909

T: +61 8 6457 7333
F: +61 8 6457 7344
E: admin@cfwa.org.au

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