

Eating the Right Fats

Unsaturated Fats

Dietary fat is categorized as saturated or unsaturated. Unsaturated fats – monounsaturated and polyunsaturated – should be the dominant type of fat in a balanced diet, because they reduce the risk of clogged arteries.

While foods tend to contain a mixture of fats, monounsaturated fat is the primary fat found in:

- olive, canola, and sesame oils
- avocado
- nuts, such as almonds, cashews, and pistachios; peanuts and peanut butter

Polyunsaturated fat is prevalent in:

- corn, cottonseed, and safflower oils
- sunflower seeds and sunflower oil
- flaxseed and flaxseed oil
- soybeans and soybean oil (don't eat)
- tub margarine (don't eat)
- seafood

Omega-3 Fats

When it comes to good-for-you fat, seafood stands out. Seafood harbors omega-3 fats called DHA (docosahexanoic acid) and EPA (eicosapentanoic acid); unsaturated fats are considered central to a child's brain development and eyesight, and for heart health.

Omega-3 fats are linked to lower levels of blood triglycerides (fats), reduced risk of clots that block the flow of blood to the heart and brain, and a normal heart beat, among other benefits.

Seafood contains preformed omega-3 fats, the type the body prefers. Adults and children can make DHA and EPA from the essential fat ALA (alpha-linolenic acid), found in foods such as walnuts and flax, but experts say less than 10% is actually converted. Fatty, cold-water fish, such as salmon, sardines, and tuna are rich in preformed omega-3s.

Source: <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/good-fats-bad-fats?page=2>

Top 10 Good Mood Foods

- Mung beans
- Lobster
- Turkey
- Asparagus
- Sunflower seeds
- Cottage cheese
- Pineapple
- Tofu*
- Spinach
- Bananas

*note: Soy products should be used moderately and always chose Organic soy.

6 Mood-Enhancing Nutrients

Omega-3 Fatty Acid

DHA and EPA from mostly animal sources, ALA from plant sources

- DHA and EPA:
 - Cold-water fish such as salmon, halibut, cod, trout, and mackerel
 - Others include bluefish, bonita, butter fish, eel, herring, kippers, pompano and sardines
 - Certain sea vegetables, such as algae
- Plant sources of omega-3's:
 - Wheat germ, walnuts, flaxseeds and flax oil, fenugreek seed and oil, chia seeds and oil, pumpkin seeds and oil

Carbohydrates

- Helps increase production of feel-good hormone serotonin, which helps elevate mood.
- Get carbohydrates from whole foods, such as whole grains and vegetables, to minimize impact on blood sugar level – fluctuation can result in mood swings.
- Adding protein and fiber lowers the glycemic load of a meal, which means less blood sugar fluctuations and fewer mood swings.

Vitamin B6

For women, whenever there are increased levels of estrogen in the body, such as during certain phases of the cycle, or during and after pregnancy, more B6 may be required.

- Legumes such as lentils and chickpeas (think Hummus) are good sources
- B6 supplement should be taken with other B vitamins to prevent metabolic imbalance

- There are some concerns around neurological effects associated with mega-doses of B6, particularly as pyridoxine hydrochloride, so it's best to limit daily intake to 500mg.

Folate

Need for folate is particularly important for women of child-bearing age, as well as for pregnant women.

- Folic acid, the supplemental form, is better absorbed than folate, the natural form
- Abundant in leafy green vegetables, such as spinach, kale, beet greens, chards, asparagus, Brussels sprouts, avocado, oranges and broccoli
- Also found in whole grains, wheat germ, yeast, fish, dairy foods, and organ meat, like liver

Selenium

Selenium content of food depends on the selenium level in the soil.

- Garlic, onion, mushroom, Swiss chard, broccoli and tomatoes are good sources if they are grown in soil rich in this mineral
- Brewer's yeast and wheat germ are good sources
- Many vegetables, whole grains (whole wheat, brown rice), and beans (black beans and kidney beans), nuts (Brazil nuts) and molasses also contain selenium
- Other sources include shellfish, salmon, snapper and halibut

Vitamin D

Vitamin D₃ is preferable to Vitamin D₂.

- Abundant in fish liver oil.
- Egg yolks, butter, liver and oily fish are also good sources
- Plant sources are fairly low in D₃ – mushrooms and dark leafy greens do contain some
- Easiest way to get the form of vitamin D most available for the body is to get 15 minutes of sunshine everyday – without any sunscreen