



Patient & Family Guide

2023

Low Fat Nutrition Guidelines



www.nshealth.ca

Low Fat Nutrition Guidelines

You may need a low fat eating plan if you have trouble digesting fat.

Having any of these symptoms after eating fatty foods or high fat meals can mean you have trouble digesting fat:

- › Heartburn
- › Burping
- › Bloating
- › Stomach (belly)pain

This guide can help you make low fat food choices.

For most people, healthy fats are part of a balanced eating plan. **This pamphlet is for people who have trouble digesting fat and who are getting help from a dietitian.**

Tips:

- Try eating **5 or 6** small meals or snacks each day instead of 3 large meals. **Do not** eat too much at one time.
- Read food labels to help you choose low fat foods:
 - › choose foods labelled “low fat” or “fat-free”
 - › avoid foods with more than **5% Daily Value (DV)** of total fat, or more than **3 grams** of fat per serving
- Limit fats and oils to **3 servings a day**. Spread these servings out during the day (**do not** eat more than one serving of fat at one time). One serving could be:
 - › 1 tsp oil, butter, or margarine
 - › 1 tbsp low fat cream cheese (no limits on amount if fat-free)
 - › 1 tbsp low fat sour cream (no limits on amount if fat-free)
 - › 1 ounce (30 grams) low fat cheese
 - › 2 tsp peanut butter

- Use low fat cooking methods like:
 - › Baking
 - › Roasting
 - › Broiling
 - › Poaching
 - › Steaming
- **Do not** eat fried foods.
- Add flavour to foods with lemon juice or herbs and spices.
- Use low fat cream soups made with skim or 1% milk.
- Lower the amount of egg yolks in food by replacing whole eggs with egg whites. Egg whites have **no fat**.
 - › For example, instead of making omelets with 3 whole eggs, use 1 whole egg and 2 egg whites.
- Use fat-free sour cream on potatoes.
- Eat fat-free or 0% MF (milk fat) yogurt.
- Eat smaller amounts of meat, fish, and poultry. **One serving is 3 ounces (90 grams)**, about the size of a deck of cards.
- Choose chicken and fish more often than red meat (like beef, pork, or lamb).

The items listed under “Best choices” in the categories below are examples of items low in fat.

Best choices	Foods to avoid
<p>Vegetables and fruit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All fresh, frozen, and canned fruits and vegetables (except those listed under “Foods to avoid”) • Vegetable juices (low sodium is healthier) • All dried fruits • Tomato paste, tomato sauces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit or vegetables that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › fried › in pastries › scalloped › deep fried › made with butter, cheese, or cream sauces • Vegetables canned in oil • Avocados • Olives • Coconuts

Best choices	Foods to avoid
<p>Grain products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breads (white or whole grain) with less than 2 grams of fat per serving • Hot cereals (like oatmeal, Cream of Wheat®) and dry cereals without nuts, seeds, or coconut • Crackers and snack foods (like Melba toast, soda crackers, graham crackers, rice crackers, rye wafers) • Pasta (white or whole grain) made without egg yolks • Rice (except fried rice) • Barley, quinoa, couscous, and other whole grains • Pretzels, low fat microwave popcorn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breads and crackers with more than 2 grams of fat per serving • Muffins, scones, doughnuts, tea biscuits, cheese bread, cornbread • Pancakes, waffles • Cereals with nuts or coconut • Egg noodles, ramen noodles • Breads with nuts, seeds, or cheese

Best choices	Foods to avoid
<p>Milk and alternatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low fat milk (skim or 1%), like cow’s milk, low fat soy, or rice milk • Fat-free or low fat yogurt, buttermilk, or evaporated milk (no more than 1% MF) • Fat-free or low fat cottage cheese, cream cheese, and sour cream (no more than 1% MF) • Fat-free or low fat cheese (no more than 20% MF), in small amounts (no more than 1 to 1 ½ ounces [30 to 40 grams] a day) • Puddings or custards made with skim milk • Ice cream or frozen yogurt made with skim milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole (homogenized), or 2% milk • Regular soy milk • Regular yogurt, ice cream, sour cream, buttermilk, cottage cheese, or cream cheese (2% MF or more) • Regular and full fat cheese products (20% MF or more) • Whipping cream, half and half

Best choices	Foods to avoid
<p>Meat and alternatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish (fresh, frozen unbattered, or packed in water or broth) • Poultry (without skin or ground), sliced, deli-style turkey breast or chicken breast • Lean cuts of meat (beef, veal, or lamb) trimmed of extra fat • Lean ground beef • Egg whites, low fat egg substitutes (like Eggbeaters®), egg yolks (no more than one egg yolk each day) • Legumes (kidney beans, split peas, lentils, chickpeas, baked beans) dried or canned without fat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High fat meats (like regular or medium ground meats, duck, ribs, bacon, sausage, deli meats made from pork or beef) • Organ meats (like liver, tripe, sweetbreads) • Corned beef • Fish (canned in oil) • Legumes canned with fat (like pork and beans) • Nuts and seeds • Peanut or other nut butters (see the last tip on page 2)

Best choices	Foods to avoid
<p>Fats and oils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spray oils (like salad spritzers) • Fat-free salad dressings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butter, margarine, oil, lard, shortening (see the last tip on page 2) • Regular salad dressings • Sauces and gravies
<p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soups (made from broth with no more than 2 grams of fat per serving) • Angel food cake • Jell-O® • Popsicles • Sherbet • Ketchup, mustard, relish, pickles • Vinegars, spices, herbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soups made with cream, 2%, or whole milk • Candies with butter, coconut, chocolate, cream, or caramel • Potato chips, Cheezies® • Cakes, cookies, pies • Desserts that are high in fat (like cheesecake and pastries)

This pamphlet is just a guide. If you have questions, please talk to your health care provider. We are here to help you.

Looking for more health information?

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: <https://library.nshealth.ca/PatientEducation>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time: call 811 or visit <https://811.novascotia.ca>

Learn about other programs and services in your community: call 211 or visit <http://ns.211.ca>

Nova Scotia Health promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.

Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

www.nshealth.ca

Prepared by: Nutrition and Food Services

Designed by: Nova Scotia Health Library Services

The information in this pamphlet is for informational and educational purposes only.

The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

LC85-0557 © May 2023 Nova Scotia Health Authority

The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.