



## DYNAMIC AGING

### *The Skinny on Trans Fats*

Trans fats are on their way out. As part of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines, healthy Americans are advised to eat less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fats and less than 300 mg/day of cholesterol, and keep trans fat consumption as low as possible. The Dietary Guidelines, along with consumer demand, have caused more and more food companies to ditch the partially hydrogenated oils that contain trans and highlight that their product now has "0 trans fats". What does this really mean for us as consumers?

If the trans fat is being replaced with "healthier fats" such as monosaturated fats found in olive and peanut oils, that's good news for your arteries. However, other products that boast "0 trans fats" have replaced these fats with saturated fats, such as coconut and palm oils. That's not good news for your arteries.

Studies of American diets show that intake of saturated fat is more excessive than intake of trans fat and cholesterol. Therefore, it is MOST important for Americans to decrease their intake of saturated fat. And, another thing to keep in mind: ALL fat is calorie dense. No matter what kind of fat monosaturated, polyunsaturated, or saturated there are 9 calories in each gram. This is in contrast to protein and carbohydrates, with 4 calories per gram.

Another thing to keep in mind is that foods with "0 trans fats" may still be high in sugar, salt, and refined carbohydrates (also called "simple sugars" which raise your blood sugar level quickly and equally as rapidly cause your blood sugar to plummet).

So, what's a consumer to do? The bottom line: You still need to be a savvy shopper and look at the ingredients on the label to select foods that are low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol. You can learn more about how to understand and use the nutrition facts label at [www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/foodlab.html](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/foodlab.html) . And, remember, fruits and vegetables are always "0 trans fat"! Don't forget to visit your local farmer's market this summer for other fresh foods.