



Dear Reader

There is a point I would like to make about the use of fats and oils. The problem with oils is their chemical structure and the damage they can undergo in the cooking process. This is why we recommend extra virgin olive oil because it is stable even at high temperatures because of its chemical bonds.

You have no doubt heard about the essential fats omega 3 and omega 6 that we need in our diets. These are found in oily fish such as salmon, trout, mackerel, tuna, sardine and herring and are needed for good heart health and many nuts and seeds. The fats found in margarine that in the ingredients are classed as hydrogenated and many deep fried foods such as chips are chemically altered in a way that can block the absorption of these essential fats we need for the healthy structure of the cell walls found in our brains and arteries. Trans fatty acids occur when any unsaturated oil is heated for a long period as in deep frying. They also form the hydrogenation process used in making margarine, shortening and other products. Anything, therefore, that contains partially hydrogenated fat contains trans fatty acids. Deep fried foods contain an abundance as do many pre-packaged foods. Trans fats block many of the good functions that essential fats have.

It is important not to become "fat phobic" but "fat smart". Cook with extra virgin olive oil. Think if you really need a spread on your bread - a lot of times such as if we are eating peanut butter we don't. The Italians dip their bread into olive oil. Find a non-hydrogenated oil margarine from your Health Food shop. But I wouldn't cook with it. Essential fats such as the Omega 3s and Omega 6s can be found in Flax seed oil, extra virgin sunflower oil, walnut oil etc. All these can be got from your Health Food shop and are very different from the oils you get in a supermarket. They are good for your cell membranes making them nice and bendy, not hard and compact. Use them on salads, baked potatoes or drizzled on vegetables. They do you good.

Yours sincerely
Rachel Biggins

Nutritional Consultant, DipION; Diridol; BANT regd.
(British Association of Nutritional Therapists (BANT) is the association of Nutritional Therapists that only accepts members from quality colleges with suitable experience.

If you think you could benefit from a one-to-one Nutritional consultation then you can find a local nutritionist by phoning 0870 606 1284 or accessing their web site at www.bant.org.uk