

5 ways to cut the fat from your diet

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About half of all Americans take steps to limit or avoid saturated fats, the kind found in foods like fatty red meat and cream. But fewer than one-third stick to the limit set by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans

to keep saturated fat intake under 10% of daily calories.

You might be surprised to learn that the single biggest source of saturated fats—35%—comes from mixed dishes, especially those with both cheese and meat. Think lasagna, burritos and pizza.

A gram of fat has twice the calories of a gram of protein or carbohydrate, so if you're trying to lose weight, cutting back on fat frees up calories for foods with greater volume.

One way to scale back is by limiting prepared foods. Fat is often added to make them taste better, rather than to add any nutritional value.

Home cooking lets you control fat content, but it doesn't have to be complicated. Rather than preparing complicated recipes, simplify by broiling or baking chicken or fish to serve with sides. Meat can be on the menu once or twice a week, but choose lean cuts of beef and pork, and trim away all the white fat you can.

When you do make recipes that call for meat and cheese, replace half the [meat](#) with vegetables or beans. Use grated parmesan, which goes farther than mozzarella, to top a dish and low- or no-fat ricotta when you want to add creaminess.

Use plant-based oils for sauteeing. They're healthier than [butter](#), but still reduce the amount of oil you use by between one-third and one-half. You're not likely to notice any taste difference, especially if you flavor your [food](#) with herbs or spices.

And avoid dishes fried in fats, especially with breading, because it's impossible to know how much fat is getting soaked up.

More information: Health.gov has more on [dietary fat](#) and how much

you should be eating.

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