

These Are 10 Of The Best Healthy Fats & High-Fat Foods You Can Eat

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Fats have gotten a bad rap over the years—but now, it seems we're finally mending our relationship with this long misunderstood macronutrient and realizing just how necessary it is for brain health, heart health, hormonal health, and even weight loss. Of course, not all fats are created equal (bad fats can increase your risk for weight gain and chronic disease), and with high-fat diets like keto gaining popularity, it's more important than ever to know which fats are healthy and which aren't.

Here, learn everything you need to know about why we need fat to thrive, the best and worst types of fat for your health, and some of the best high-fat foods you can add to your diet.

Why your body absolutely needs fat.

We've come a long way from our fat-free days—and thank goodness for that, as fats play multiple crucial roles in the body. Here, functional medicine nutritionist [Megan Fahey, R.D.](#), shares some key reasons to embrace fat:

- Fat is necessary for satiety. Ask anyone who's switched from a fat-free salad dressing to one made with extra-virgin olive oil and vinegar—you will feel way fuller after eating the latter. "Fat is the macronutrient that triggers the brain to recognize fullness when eating," says Fahey, "which helps regulate internal fullness cues to prevent overeating."
- Fat is necessary for vitamin and mineral absorption. Fat can instantly up the health cred of nearly any meal. "Four vitamins necessary for bodily functions can only be absorbed in the presence of fat: vitamins A, D, E, and K," says Fahey. Plus, numerous antioxidants, like lycopene, are better absorbed in the presence of fat, and research has linked saturated fat to improved calcium absorption and bone health.
- Fat keeps your brain functioning and nerves firing. "The brain is essentially a blob of fat and cholesterol, so dietary fat is important to provide your brain the building blocks it needs to function," says Fahey, adding that fat also coats, protects, and insulates nerves, enabling them to send signals between brain and body.
- Fat and cholesterol fuel your sex drive. Bet you didn't know this one! Saturated fat and cholesterol are necessary to synthesize sex hormones—estrogen, progesterone, testosterone—and help maintain overall hormonal balance, Fahey says.
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10 of the healthiest high-fat foods.

The above information is a good guide for helping you choose the right fats. But still, there are some standout high-fat foods that deserve their own shout out. Here, some of the most nutritious fatty foods out there:

1. **Fatty fish** - fatty acids are crucial for proper development, cardiovascular protection, and brain health
2. **Whole eggs** - opt for pasture-raised varieties, which are higher in omega-3 fatty acids and vitamins K2, E, and A
3. **Avocado** - over 14 minerals & loads of soluble fiber, which traps excess cholesterol and send it out of the system
4. **Extra Virgin Olive Oil** - anti-inflammatory properties have been shown to slow cancer cell growth in lab studies
5. **Olives** - like EVOO, contain polyphenols, which help reduce inflammation and promote heart and brain health
6. **Nuts (especially walnuts)** - great fiber, protein, and fat content and can be a key tool in helping you lose weight
7. **Flax, chia & hemp seeds** - great sources of omega-3 ALA, which helps reduce inflammation throughout the body
8. **Dark Chocolate** - 70 to 80% cacao - contains stress-busting, sleep-enhancing magnesium, plus antioxidants
9. **Coconut and MCT oil** - along with diet high in veggies and fiber, and mainly free of refined carbs, can actually improve cholesterol composition.
10. **Parmesan cheese** - very low in lactose and can often be tolerated by people with lactose intolerance, it also packs a big protein punch, with 11 grams per ounce