African American Health Coalition, Inc.

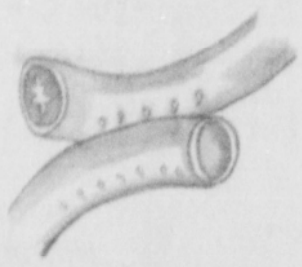
Food plays a big part in the lives of most African Americans. Good food and celebrations go hand in hand. Yet,the traditional ways of frying foods and using fats for seasoning can increase your risk for clogged arteries and heart disease. Choose foods lower in saturated fat and cholesterol to reduce your risk. Hold on to tradition, but make a few changes to eat in a heart-healthy way.

Fat in your food

The two main types of fat found in food are saturated and unsaturated. Most foods have a mix of both. Together,the two are called total fat.

Why should you be concerned about saturated fat?

Saturated fat raises blood cholesterol the most. Over time,this extra cholesterol can clog your arteries. You are then at risk for having a heart attack or stroke.



Where is saturated fat found?

Saturated fat is found mostly in foods that come from animals. These include:

- fatty cuts of meat (beef, lamb, pork)
- poultry with skin
- whole and 2% milk
- butter
- cheese
- lard

A high content of saturated fat can be found in some foods that come from plants such as:

- palm kernel oil
- palm oil
- coconut oil
- cocoa butter

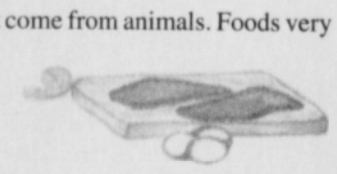
Why should you be concerned about cholesterol?

Your body makes all the cholesterol you need. Eating foods high in saturated fat can raise your blood cholesterol levels. The higher your blood cholesterol,the greater your risk for heart disease. Too much cholesterol can lead to clogged arteries. You are then at risk for having a heart attack,a stroke,or poor circulation.

Where is cholesterol found?

Cholesterol is found only in foods that come from animals. Foods very high in cholesterol include:

- Egg yolks
- Organ meats (Liver, kidney, and brains are especially high in cholesterol.)



There is no cholesterol in plant foods like fruits, vegetables, beans, and grains.

Limit your cholesterol

If you are healthy, you should average no more than 300 milligrams of cholesterol per day. People who have high blood cholesterol or a heart problem may have to eat less. The yolk of one large egg provides about 214 milligrams of cholesterol. Aim for no more than four egg yolks each week. This includes egg yolks in baked goods and processed foods. Egg whites contain no cholesterol.

Cut back on saturated fat and cholesterol

Try some of these new ways of cooking and shopping.

New ways for favorite recipes:

- For biscuits—Use vegetable oil instead of lard or butter and skim milk or 1 percent buttermilk instead of regular milk.
- For macaroni and cheese—Use low-fat cheese and 1 percent or skim milk.
- For greens—Use skin-free smoked turkey, liquid smoke, fat-free bacon bits, or low-fat bacon instead of fatty meats.
- For gravies or sauces—Skim the fat off pan drippings. For cream or white sauces, use skim milk and soft tub or liquid margarine.
- For dressings or stuffing—Add broth or skimmed fat drippings instead of lard or butter. Use herbs and spices for added flavor.
- For sweet potato pie—Mash sweet potato with orange juice concentrate, nutmeg, vanilla, cinnamon, and only one egg. Leave out the butter.
- For cakes, cookies, quick breads, and pancakes—Use egg whites or egg substitute instead of whole eggs. Two egg whites can be substituted in many recipes for one whole egg. Use applesauce instead of some of the fat.

Healthy ways of cooking:

- Bake, steam, roast, broil, stew, or boil instead of frying. This helps remove fat. Try these quick tips:
- For crispy fish: roll in cornmeal and bake.
- For crispy chicken: remove the skin; dip in skim milk mixed with herbs and spices; roll in bread crumbs, cornflakes, or potato flakes; and bake.
- Take off poultry skin before eating.
- Use a nonstick pan with vegetable cooking oil spray or a small amount of liquid vegetable oil instead of lard, butter, shortening, or other fats that are solid at room temperature.
- Trim visible fat before you cook meats.
- Chill meat and poultry broth until fat becomes solid. Skim off fat before using the broth. Use skimmed broth to cook greens instead of fatback, hog jowls, or salt pork.

Healthy shopping tips:

- Choose chicken breast or drumstick instead of the wing and thigh.
- Select skim milk or 1 percent instead of 2 percent or whole milk (sweet).
- Buy lean cuts of meat such as round, sirloin, and loin.
- Buy more vegetables, fruits, and grains.
- Read nutrition labels on food packages.

Traditional favorite cuts of meats

Choose MORE often	Choose LESS often
Pork	**Pork**
Ears	Brains (are low in fat but high in cholesterol)
Neckbone	Hogmaws
Feet	Tongue
Ham hocks	Tail
Beef	Vienna sausage
Tripe	Ribs
	Chitterlings
	Beef
	Oxtail

Let the food label help you choose foods lower in saturated fat and cholesterol:

When you select a food, reading the food label can help you view its saturated fat and cholesterol levels. At first, reading labels may be confusing, but the more you do it, the easier it will become. Soon you will be able to easily make food choices for a healthy heart.

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size: 1 cup (228 g)
Serving Per Package 2

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 260	Calories from fat 120
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 13g	20%
Saturated Fat 5g	25%
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 600mg	28%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	

Vitamin A 4% • Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 15% • Iron 4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Size up your food.

Compare the amounts you eat to the serving size given. If you eat 2 cups and the serving size is 1 cup, you have to double the amounts listed.

Check it out!

1. Here are the amounts of fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.
2. Use the Percent Daily Value to compare the amounts of total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol among brands. Choose those that have lower values. One serving of this food contains about 20 percent of the Daily Value for total fat, which is about one-fifth of the amount of total fat you should have for the entire day.

Check how you will try to eat less saturated fat and cholesterol.

- ☐ *Use skim milk or 1 percent milk in your cereal or coffee.*
- ☐ *Prepare macaroni and cheese with skim milk and low-fat cheese.*
- ☐ *Bake, roast, or broil chicken or fish instead of frying.*
- ☐ *Cook greens with a skin-free turkey leg instead of fatty meats like bacon and fatback.*
- ☐ *Read food labels when you shop to check for total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.*

NATIONAL HEART, LUNG, AND BLOOD INSTITUTE

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Public Health Service
National Institutes of Health
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
NIH Publication No. 97-4064
September 1997

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For more information contact AAHC at 503-413-1850
or visit the AAHC website at www.aahc-portland.org