

Chapter 4

Thoda kam - Fat

For more than half a century now we have been asked to eat a low fat diet to save our health, but have progressively only become more unhealthy, fat and diseased. Confused?

Well, that's exactly how news about fat has always been over the decades: complicated, confusing, and contradictory.

That said: one fact that stands validated and strong still, is that excess of fat intake is a clear risk factor for obesity and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) like diabetes and heart diseases.

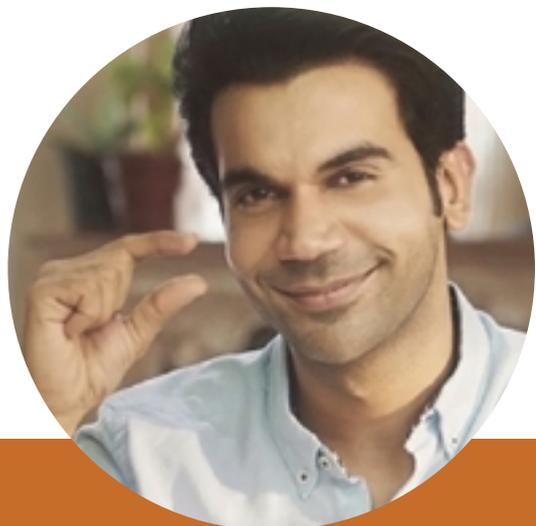
Now the right message is not to 'give up' fat, but to reduce the consumption as we all do need some fat to stay healthy.

How much?

Now that it is decided that giving up fats is a bad idea, how do we decide how much fat to eat? Well, keep calories coming from fats to maximum 25% of your total calorie intake for the day. Basically, if you are eating a 2000 calorie diet then not more than 500 calories should be from fats, both visible (what you cook in) as well as invisible (nuts, oilseeds, milk, eggs, fish, etc). Easier way would be to stick to about 20-25g gm or ml (4 tsp) of visible fat (cooking oil) per person per day, and avoiding processed foods that are high in fat. Nuts and seeds also form an integral component of the 'fat' category. They provide us with the good fats. Include peanuts, almonds, pistachio, sesame seeds. etc., in your daily diet.

The Good Work

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India launched 'Aaj Se Thoda Kam' campaign as a preventive healthcare measure to address various lifestyle related non-communicable diseases. The campaign aims to promote reduction of fat through communication material and a TVCs featuring actor Rajkummar Rao for wider and more effective dissemination in mass media and social media and is proving very effective at this.



Karo Thoda Kam

- ★ Gradually reduce the use of oil in your daily diet.
- ★ Track and monitor the consumption of oil at home - buy and use only a fixed quantity every month and try reducing its quantity further.
- ★ Measure cooking oil with a small spoon rather than pouring freely from the bottle.
- ★ Change the type of oil every month.
- ★ Do not repeatedly reheat oil or re-use the same oil for frying or cooking. This is elaborated further in the box.
- ★ Avoid frying as much as possible. Instead boil, steam, roast or grill food.
- ★ Moderate the use of butter and ghee.
- ★ Avoid vanaspati, bakery shortenings and margarine as they contain trans fats (bad fat).
- ★ Moderate the consumption of bakery products or processed foods high in fat.
- ★ Choose lean meat sources like chicken or fish over red meat or organ meat, if you are non-vegetarian

Why do we need **Fat**?

Yes, you read it right, fat in fact is quite vital to help us lead healthy, productive lives. Dietary fats supply us with energy. So, if you want to feel good all day long, you need to make sure you are getting enough fats, and the right types. Eating less fat means one ends up eating more carbohydrates, (and the wrong type!). When we replace the fat with quick burning carbs we tend to feel fatigued, and also risk wreaking havoc on the metabolism and hormones.

Fat also provides fat soluble Vitamins A, D, E and K. This means their absorption and proper use in the body depends on the presence of fat in our diet. These vitamins are essential for blood clotting, cell repair, growth and immunity.

Certain essential fatty acids omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids are linked to the production of many chemicals in the brain, and their deficiency can play havoc with our mood. Our hormones get affected too, as most hormones running in our body depend on fats to stay the course. Very often hormonal imbalances can be traced to low fat diets.



Choose Wisely

Elimination of fat from the diet usually means eating more carbs and proteins, which is not a good idea. Too much protein has been linked to nephrological problem or kidney damage, and carbs in excess are any ways clearly bad for us.

Finally cutting down fat does not help in weight loss. Fat delivers a feeling of satiety as they keep our blood sugar levels stable longer and prevent excess hunger and cravings. Whereas with fat free meals we usually end up eating and eating, and consume excess calories without realizing.



Quit repeated use of cooking oil

You must have seen the same oil being reheated again and again to cook the snacks when you go to a restaurant, hotel or at the local shop. We are guilty of doing this at our homes too. But is this practice safe? Have you ever wondered what this practice does to our health?

The Dangers

Eating food cooked in the oil that has been reheated again and again is the worst thing we can do to our heart and general health. This process - reheating oil - leads to formation of toxic compounds in the oil which when ingested lead to multiple health problems. Cooking food in dark coloured oil giving blue-grey colour smoke which is being used and reheated throughout the day can make the food rancid, release harmful toxins, form trans fats, which can further lead to:

1

Increase in free radicals in the body, which can cause inflammation - the root cause of most diseases including obesity, heart disease and diabetes.

2

Increase in level of LDL or bad cholesterol in the body which can lead to heart disease and stroke.

3

Burning sensation in stomach and throat and acidity.

4

Higher risk of cancer. Reheating the oil changes its composition which leads to release of So be wary! Very wary!

The Good Work

While using the same cooking oil for repeated frying has adverse health effects, this Used Cooking Oil is also a potential feedstock for manufacturing biodiesel. Therefore, on the occasion of World Biofuel Day i.e. 10th August 2018, FSSAI has launched 'Repurpose Used Cooking Oil' (RUCO) - an ecosystem to enable the collection and conversion of used cooking oil to biodiesel. FSSAI has created a nationwide eco-system to collect used cooking oil to be converted into bio-diesel. In a typical year, Indian masses consume about 23 million tons of

cooking oil. Hence There is a potential to recover about 3 million tons of used edible oil for producing bio-diesel,

The government has introduced a new set of regulations governing the use of cooking oil which has set the maximum permissible limit of Total Polar Compound (TPC) in cooking oil at 25 percent. As part of RUCO, standards relating to total polar compounds in cooking oil have been notified, guidelines and directions have been issued to streamline the collection process. A "RUCO Compliant" sticker has also been released for food businesses complying with the regulations.

Use Oil Responsibly at Home

For cooking at home using a fresh batch every time is a good practice but may not really be economical and practical. But you can reduce the risk of negative effects that of reused oil by following these pointers:

- ★ Make sure the leftover oil from cooking or frying is cooled down, strained (as food particles in used edible oil further spoils it) and then transferred into an airtight container, which can be used for making parathas and vegetables.
- ★ Always check the oil each time before reuse; if it's dark in colour and is sticky then don't use it.
- ★ If the oil begins to smoke too quickly while heating it, please discard it. Nothing is more important than your health.

