

FIVE FATS

YOU *SHOULD* BE

EATING

FOR HEALTH

AND WEIGHT LOSS



GET HEALTHY  Chris Freytag

5 FATS YOU *SHOULD* BE EATING FOR HEALTH AND WEIGHT LOSS

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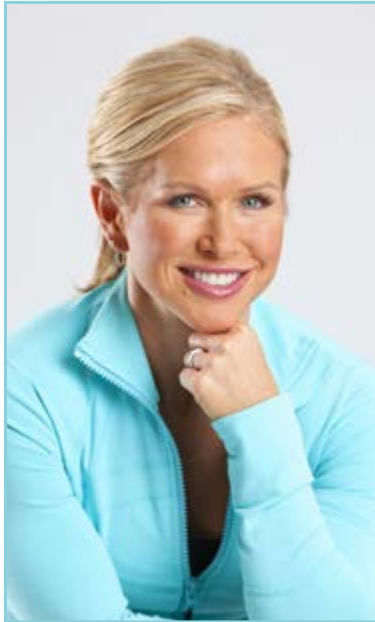
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ABOUT CHRIS:

Chris Freytag is a nationally recognized fitness expert, public speaker, contributing editor to *Prevention* magazine and an author of several books, including her latest, a healthy cookbook titled, [CHOOSE THIS!](#) Chris shares her tips weekly on the Minneapolis NBC affiliate and on shows like the *Today Show* and *Lifetime TV*. She has created dozens of workout DVDs that will keep you motivated. Her latest is a collection of 7 [ACE HIIT series](#). Chris is passionate about helping people live healthier lives, and she works with all groups of adults, kids, and athletes. She also is very involved with several nonprofit organizations geared towards helping youth get active.

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The 80s was the Decade of Fat. It was the decade where medical experts and dietitians told us NOT to eat fat and as a result, America got fat! Before 1980, the obesity rate in the United States was 12-14 percent. By the late 80s, it ballooned to 25 percent. Now we're at over 30 percent and one-in-three of us weighs 30+ more pounds more than we should. Holy moly!

Don't get me wrong, we were health conscious in the 80s. We started joining gyms and watching our cholesterol carefully. Doctors told us that because dietary fat contains twice as many calories as carbohydrates or protein, eating fat made us fat. Plus we thought fat raised our cholesterol. Food manufactures started making a low fat or no fat versions of everything from condiments to cookies, crackers, and dairy. We thought we were making healthier choices. Yet, as we mentally avoided fat, we felt deserving of larger portions and started gorging ourselves with enjoyment.

I was one of those fat-free crusaders in the 80s and even the 90s. I was very loyal to my fat-free products and sacrificed taste for what I thought was better health. But fast forward, we now know when the fat is taken out of foods, more sugar usually replaces the fat as well as artificial flavors, refined carbohydrates



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and chemicals and this wreaks havoc on our systems. Once I started eating full fat products again while avoiding added sugars and chemicals, I felt more energetic, less bloated, more satisfied... overall happier and healthier.

You see, fat doesn't make you fat — sweeteners and other refined carbohydrates do, because they trigger your body's insulin response. Insulin transforms these sweets and carbs into fats (called triglycerides) and stores them in fat cells around your belly. And as long as insulin is present, your metabolism can't burn them off.

Your body needs fat to be healthy, so don't be afraid of full-fat foods. Fat supplies your body with essential fatty acids which it is incapable of producing so you must get them from your food. Fat helps your systems work properly, improves muscle recovery, improves skin and hair quality...it basically is a life saver! Just be sure you're choosing fats from high-quality sources. Stay away from polyunsaturated vegetable oils, margarine, and any food containing any type of "partially hydrogenated or hydrogenated oil" (a horrible trans-fat).

And even better, some fats can actually help you lose weight. If you're hoping

to shed pounds or just elevate your health a little, you might still assume that fats should be one of the first things to rule out in your diet due to the high calories. Well, that's partly true. I'm not here to say you can eat all the fatty foods you want without it affecting your waistline. Also, the *kinds* of fats I recommend are not of the greasy burger variety. They're plant-based fats that pack a lot of nutritional value. I personally eat all the foods listed here pretty much every day.

There are many types of fat in foods, including some that are quite beneficial for your health, as you'll see below. While healthy fats wouldn't be considered low-calorie by any stretch, they can play a role in helping you watch your weight. One main reason is because healthy fats are filling. When you eat them in moderation, they actually cause you to feel fuller for longer (goodbye, overeating). They also help reduce cravings for crunchy, munchy, sugary snacks. The less you crave poor-quality foods like deep-fried foods or snacks pumped full of sugar, the fewer overall calories you take in.

Let's dig in and see what each of these **five healthy fats** has going for it – and how each one can benefit you!

AVOCADOS

1

Heart-healthy and good for anti-aging, avocados contain anti-oxidants that help you detox and fight harmful free radicals in the body. When eaten with other foods – like a salad – avocados help your body absorb nutrients from those other foods, too.

Avocados are rich in potassium. One avocado has actually three times as much potassium as one banana.

Avocados are also high in both soluble and insoluble fiber – yes, fiber! It's the soluble fiber that plays a role in making you feel fuller for longer. The same goes for oleic acid, also found in avocados. Oleic acid activates your brain to signal a full feeling in the body and helps lower bad (LDL) cholesterol.

Let me give you one more reason why avocados top this list of five fats to eat: folate. Not only does this vitamin lessen the risk of birth defects, it's good for the heart and for decreasing the chance of a stroke. <http://www.californiaavocado.com/nutrition/>



How to eat it: I eat avocados as guacamole, spread it on sprouted-grain bread or chop it up into a green salad. I also put it in smoothies to make them creamy.

More information can be found [here](#).

2 OLIVE OIL

Olive oil is a monounsaturated fatty acid (MUFA) – one of the “good” fats. Rich in antioxidants, including Vitamin E, olive oil has been shown to lower your risk of heart disease and may also be beneficial in helping control blood-sugar levels for people with Type 2 diabetes.

As a fat, it’s high in calories. But, when served fresh, it’s oh-so-flavorful. A little olive oil goes a long way, so you might eat less of this heart-healthy fat than not-as-healthy alternatives like stick margarine or butter.

How to eat it: Use olive oil in place of less healthy fats like stick margarine. I use it in salad dressings, sautés and as a dip for sprouted-grain bread (instead of butter).

[Click here](#) for more information about the health benefits of olive oil.



SEEDS

3

Each compact seed contains a host of health properties. There's fiber, iron, omega-3 fatty acids, protein and more. Finding the seeds that you like best is a matter of experimentation, but some do pack more of a nutrient punch than others.

For example, the omega-3 fatty acids found in chia seeds are through the roof. Like other seeds, chia seeds contain iron and folate. There's also soluble fiber, which, as mentioned above, helps you feel fuller for longer, making you less prone to snacking or binging from hunger.

In addition to chia seeds, I'm also a fan of flax, pumpkin and raw sunflower seeds.

How to eat it: I toss seeds into smoothies and salads, or sprinkle them on top of oatmeal or yogurt. I also make my own trail mix with seeds, nuts and dried fruit. I keep a Baggie in my handbag as a snack.

More information can be found [here](#).



4 NUTS

A cousin to seeds, nuts – such as walnuts, almonds and hazelnuts - are an example of unsaturated fat. They're amazingly heart-healthy due to the type of omega-3 fatty acids they contain. All kinds of nuts are known for lowering cholesterol, boosting the immune system and promoting cardiovascular health.

As with other healthy fats mentioned so far, the soluble fiber in nuts gives you that full feeling, so you're not scavenging the kitchen for more food (and more calories) soon after mealtime.

How to eat it: A handful of nuts makes a nice snack – BUT be sure you're noshing on raw or roasted nuts (raw is best) that haven't been coated with loads of saturated fat, sugary seasoning and/or salt. Another option is to toss nuts in salad in place of croutons. I also blend them up with fruits and veggies in my smoothies.

[Click here](#) for more information.



COCONUT OIL

5

There are two reasons why I love coconut oil: 1) it can be a healthy ingredient in food and cooking, and 2) it makes a great moisturizer when applied directly to your skin.

Although coconut oil is a saturated fat, it's derived from plants, which makes it slightly different from the saturated fat that's derived from animals. In fact, the saturated fat in coconut oil has been shown to lower cholesterol and rev up metabolism. It also helps promote a healthy immune system, greater energy and good heart health.

This oil works well for cooking because it can tolerate high temperatures without breaking down into trans fat (which is not a good fat). When I cook with coconut oil, I notice that I tend to use less of it than if I were to use butter, for example. (Another bonus for weight loss.)

How to eat it: I like to add a tblsp to oatmeal, or spread it thinly on sprouted-grain bread. I use it to sauté veggies and I also use it when baking. (I keep a jar in my bathroom and put it on my skin after a shower...it's so moisturizing but is a little greasy so only use when you are not getting nicely dressed right away.)

More information can be found [here](#).

