

From Ronda's Front Porch to Yours

Ronda White

Good Fat Versus Bad Fat

Today there are many fad diets on the market. They all have different recommendations and some make it impossible to enjoy eating the foods we may enjoy the most. Most diets typically limit the amount of fat consumption and the word alone implies a negative connotation.

Are all fats bad for you? Not necessarily. "Healthy fats are essential to the body and the body needs them to function properly", said Sheree Taylor, a regional human nutrition, diet and health agent with Alabama Extension. "It helps to prevent blood clot formation and protect against irregular heartbeats."

Let's take a look at the classifications of fat and sort out the facts of good versus bad fats. The healthy fats we consume are unsaturated fats. Consuming these types of fat can improve health, skin softness and metabolism.

Within the unsaturated fat category are poly and monounsaturated fats. Monounsaturated fats are found mostly in oils, which include fish, avocados, olive oil, almonds, cashews and peanut butter or oil. Sources of polyunsaturated fats include corn oil, safflower oil, flaxseed, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds.

According to Taylor, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats help protect the heart and lowers your bad cholesterol (LDL). The omega 3 fats help prevent clogging of the arteries.

Saturated fat is the bad fat. They come from animal sources and hydrogenated vegetable oils. This includes meats, butter and poultry skin. Within this category is trans-fatty acids. A person consuming trans fatty acids mostly acquire these through eating fried and fast food, candy, cookies and margarine. Diets high in saturated and trans fat can lead to health problems such as heart attack, diabetes, stroke and obesity.

Try out this healthy Easy Avocado and Tomato Salad. Avocados contain the monounsaturated fat are also packed with folate, vitamins E, C and B6, potassium and fiber.

Easy Avocado and Tomato Salad

2 avocados, ripe
2 tomatoes
The juice of 1 lime
4 T. olive oil
1 garlic clove, chopped finely

Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Cut the tomatoes into large chunks. Cut the avocados in half and remove the pit. Cut the avocado flesh into chunks around the same size as the tomato chunks. This can be done by either removing the avocado skin and chopping it or can be done by cutting the avocado while still in the skin and turning the skin inside out.

Add olive oil, lime juice and garlic. Season with salt and pepper.

Resource: www.eatright.org, Alabama Extension Service

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