INDIANA'S EMERGENCY FOOD RESOURCE NETWORK

DECEMBER 2025

A Newsletter for the Staff and Volunteers

Ask the Expert:

What Are Omega-3s?

Written by Elaine Wang, Purdue University Nutrition and Dietetics, Fitness and Health '27

Have you ever wondered about why some fats are called "good fats"? One of the fats that are often given this label are Omega-3s.

Omega 3s are called "good fats" because our bodies need them to function and we can only get them through the food we eat because our bodies cannot make Omega-3s. This helpful fat is important for making new cells and keeping cells that we have healthy, especially brain and eye cells. Omega-3s also support heart health by helping to lower triglycerides, which is a common fat type stored in our body for energy use. Having high levels of triglycerides in the blood can put us at a risk of getting heart disease and even having a heart attack or stroke.

There are 3 types of Omega-3s: docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), and alpha-linoleic acid (ALA). Omega-3s are found in both animal and plant-based foods. EPA and DHA are found in food sources like fatty fish (salmon and tuna). ALA is found in plant-based foods like vegetable oils. Eating a mix of these three types is important to get the amount of Omega-3s our bodies need to function.

Although supplements are available, it's best to get omega-3s from food instead of supplements, and only take a supplement after talking with a healthcare provider or registered dietitian.

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Sources:https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2025/08/what-are-omega-3s https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/17290-omega-3-fatty-acids

Food Safety: Avoid Foodborne Ilness From Seafood

Written by Emma Araya, Purdue University Nutrition and Dietetics '26.

Seafood is one of the food categories where food safety is very important. Some types of seafood like oysters and fish need special attention in the way they are handled, which can be an issue with these types of foods. To eat seafood safely, follows these tips:

- Buy fish from trusted sources like grocery stores and seafood markets. Avoid buying seafood from people off the side of the road and/or unmarked places.

- Refrigerate fish and seafood at or below 40F always. If the seafood at the store is not on a thick bed of ice, avoid purchasing.

- Look for skin of fish to be shiny and firm. It should not seperate or have an overly fishy or bad smell.

-Avoid using the same surfaces for raw and cooked fish and seafood. They should always be seperated.

-Pickup fish or seafood towards the end of your shopping trip to make sure it is as fresh as possible.

Sources: https://www.eatright.org/food/home-food-safety/safe-cooking-and-prep/how-to-reduce-food-poisoning-from-seafood

Kale and Tuna Salad

Directions

1. Cut tomatoes in half and lightly toss in bowl with balsamic vinegar, oil, and pinch of salt and pepper. Set aside.
2. In a seperate bowl, mix tuna,/salmon, juice from 1/2 lemon and a pinch of pepper.
3. In another bowl, massage kale for about 3 minutes to soften it with the other half of the lemon juice.
4. Add the kale and the tomatoes to the tuna. Mix until all is coated with dressing.

Ingredients (4 servings)

- 2 cans of canned tuna or salmon*
- 1 bunch kale (or 1 bag)
- 2 oz of tomatoes*
- 1 lemon
- 1/4 cup olive oil (any kind)
- 1/8 cup balsamic vinegar
- Salt (to taste)
- Freshly ground pepper (to taste)

Nutrition Facts (per serving)

Calories: 215
Protein: 15g
Carbs: 6g
Fat: 13g

****foods included in the TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program)***

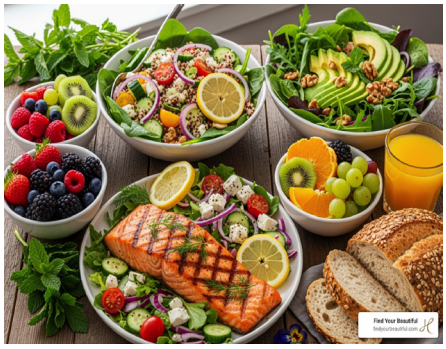
Sources: https://www.myplate.gov/recipes/chocolate-peanut-butter-frozen-

Eating Right:
Lowering Saturated Fats In Your Diet

Written by Liz Pfeifer, Purdue University Nutrition and Dietetics, Fitness Health '27

Fat is one of the three main nutrients that our bodies need. Fats gives us energy, help us absorb different vitamins, form hormones, and protect our organs. Many types of fat exist in our diet and each works differently in our bodies. The most common fats found in our diets include saturated and unsaturated (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated are types of unsaturated fat). Saturated fats are solid at room temperature (butter, coconut oil etc.) and unsaturated fats are liquid at room temperature (oils, such as olive oil or canola oil).

Saturated fat is mainly found in meat and dairy as well as in some plant oils such as palm, coconut, and palm kernel oil. According to the American Heart Association, ideally, saturated fat intake should be eaten in low amounts in our diets. Some of the most common sources of saturated fat in the American diet comes from convenience foods such like sandwiches, pizza, burgers, and desserts like ice cream and baked goods. Limiting these foods can help lower your saturated fat intake.



Other ways to lower saturated fat are to choose plant-based oils over animal fats, and to eat more low-fat dairy and lean meats, and to read nutrition labels carefully. By lowering intake of saturated fats, and eating more unsaturated fats, you can protect your heart and live a long and healthy life.

Sources: https://nutritionsource.hsph.harvard.edu/what-should-you-eat/fats-and-cholesterol/types-of-fat/, https://www.roswellpark.org/cancertalk/202401/10-tips-incorporating-healthy-fats-your-diet, https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/fat/art-20045550, https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter_article/no-need-to-avoid-healthy-omega-6-fats

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Send comments and/or change of address to:
Indiana's Emergency Food Resource Network
Department of Nutrition Science
Purdue University
700 West State Street
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2059
Phone: (765) 496-0271
Fax: (765) 494-9606
Email: earaya@purdue.edu
Website: www.purdue.edu/indianasefrnetwork/

This newsletter is edited by Emma Araya and Heather A. Eicher-Miller, PhD and is created by the Eicher-Miller Lab in the Department of Nutrition Science at Purdue University. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

In The News: Winter Food Budgeting Tips

Written by Emma Araya, Purdue University Nutrition and Dietetics '26

Winter is a busy time for everyone. Between holiday shopping for gifts and the cold weather approaching, it can be hard for your wallet to adjust. Managing and budgeting for your food shopping can help you stretch some of your food dollars further. Here are some tips:

- Finds fruits and vegetables that are in-season. Usually the produce that is on sale and in the front of the store is the in-season fruit.

-Buy non-perishables in bulk. For example, buying a big bag of rice instead of a smaller one can help you avoid bigger shopping trips and make your food last longer.

-Plan ahead. Instead of going without any ideas of what you will buy, making a list beforehand can help you avoid buying things you don't need and prevent food waste.

Sources: https://www.bankfivenine.com/everyday-money/winter-budgeting-tips-simple-strategies-to-stay-financially-cozy-this-season/https://nationalpeanutboard.org/news/looking-for-a-reason-to-party-theres-a-peanut-day-for-that/