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SEPTEMBER 2018
MensHealth.com





Supermarket Decoder

Aisles of Oils

Picking a cooking fat used to be easy: You only had vegetable oil, Crisco, and olive oil. Now there's grass-fed beef tallow, organic duck fat, and artisanal ghee. Here's how to sort out the bull and improve your diet. **By Rachel Meltzer Warren, R.D.**

DON'T FALL FOR FAKE

"Extra-virgin" olive oil undergoes minimal processing. But a report from UC Davis found that 73 percent of imported extra-virgin olive oils in the U.S. from top brands failed "extra-virgin" standards tests. Look for certification like NAOOA or COOC on the label for trusted oils tested regularly for purity, quality, and nutrients.

TURN OUT THE "LIGHT"

"Light" does not mean better for you," says Angel Planells, a Seattle-based dietitian. The term indicates the oil has been further refined to remove flavor. Light olive oil tastes flavorless, similar to vegetable oil. Looking to save calories? Cut back on how much oil you use. All cooking fats contain about 100 to 130 calories per tablespoon. That's usually about the amount you need for cooking.

DOWNSIZE YOUR JUG

Fats are sensitive to light, temperature, and time. A supersized tin or bottle of oil may be less expensive ounce for ounce, but taste and nutritional quality will likely degrade before you use it all, says Planells. Buy a two-month supply. For most families, that's a 17-ounce bottle.

COCONUT IS NOT KING

Internet "experts" have touted this oil as a cure-all for health woes. There's no conclusive evidence that coconut oil will help you lose weight, boost your energy levels, or reduce diabetes risk. That said, it's delicious. But isn't it full of saturated fat? Well...

DON'T FEAR FAT

A 2018 study by British scientists found that people experienced no significant changes in weight,

BMI, or systolic or diastolic blood pressure whether they ate 50 grams (a little less than ¼ cup) of butter, olive oil, or coconut oil daily for four weeks. A separate 2018 study in India reported that people who typically consumed ghee (a clarified butter used in Indian cooking) had better cholesterol profiles than those who favored mustard oil. So what's the best cooking fat?

DIVERSIFY

Each fat offers different nutrients, Planells says. For instance, olive oil is loaded with polyphenol antioxidants, and sunflower oil is a good source of vitamin E. Match your fat's flavor to your cooking. Use butter for omelets, olive oil for Italian, duck fat for oven fries, ghee for curry, and a neutral oil such as canola or safflower oil for everything else.

Breakthroughs

EAT BETTER RIGHT NOW



Keep It Green

Verdant vegetables may slow brain aging. People who ate the most leafy greens (measuring daily) showed a cognitive equivalent of being 11 years younger than those who ate the least, found a *Neurology* study. Credit: the neuroprotective nutrients lutein, folate, and phytylquinone. Fill up on the greens the scientists studied: spinach, kale, and collards.

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THE PERCENTAGE OF ADVERTISEMENTS DURING MAJOR TELEVISED SPORTING EVENTS THAT PROMOTE JUNK FOOD. SOURCE: *Peelwire*

Unleash the Purple Diabetes Eater

Red cabbage, blackberries, and eggplant are purple, in part, due to potent antioxidants called anthocyanins. These compounds may fight type 2 diabetes, reports a review by Polish researchers. How? Anthocyanins may help regulate blood glucose and reduce insulin resistance.



Give Junk Some Space

Resistance is a game of inches—about 28 inches, UK researchers found that people were up to 63 percent more likely to eat from a candy bowl if it was positioned about 8 inches away than if it was about 28 inches away. Even this short distance may increase "perceived effort."



Food for You: Chris L. Newkirk/epix.com; a sports nutritionist; iStockphoto.com; Getty Images/Chris Wedel; iStockphoto.com; iStockphoto.com; iStockphoto.com