

# Healthy oils to keep in the kitchen

July 10 2017, by Siddhi Shroff

---

While eating too much fat can lead to weight gain and associated health problems, a moderate amount of fat is essential to a healthy lifestyle. Adding a little fat to your food—such as cooking oil—can help fill you up, become the body's source of energy once carbohydrates are used up, and helps with absorption of several fat-soluble vitamins.

Recently, one of the most popular sources of added fat—coconut oil—has come under fire. Though long touted as "healthy," recent recommendations from the American Heart Association advise limiting its use.

Confused about which oils might benefit you most in the kitchen? Here's a quick rundown of which types of cooking oils you avoid, and which ones you should definitely give a try.

Limit your use of saturated or "solid fats" – oils that are solid at room temperature. They include coconut oil, butter, palm oil, beef tallow, lard and more. Because saturated fat contributes to raising the level of LDL (bad) cholesterol, the AHA recommends that saturated fat should make up less than 10 percent of total caloric intake for healthy Americans, and no more than 6 percent for those who need to lower cholesterol levels.

Luckily, there are a variety of common cooking oils that are low in saturated fat and offer other health benefits:

- Canola oil: it's the lowest in saturated fat (7 percent). It also contains high levels of [monounsaturated fatty acids](#), which lower

LDL, and in recent years has been studied in relation to helping control blood glucose. This oil is great for stir-frying, grilling, and replacing many solid fats in recipes.

- Olive oil: a mainstay of the popular Mediterranean diet, it's associated with many [health benefits](#), including lower death rates from cardiovascular disease and a reduction of inflammation in the body. Extra-virgin and virgin olive oils are better for uncooked dishes, like salads, while refined olive oils will stand up better to higher-heat uses.
- Peanut oil: It's high in monounsaturated (good) fat and contains vitamin E, an antioxidant that helps maintain a strong immune system and healthy skin and eyes. With its high smoke point, this oil is ideal for frying, roasting and grilling.
- Avocado oil: This oil is also high in monounsaturated fats, can be good for [cholesterol levels](#) and contains vitamin E, which also helps with the formation of [red blood cells](#). It has a mild flavor, which makes it great for salad dressing and garnish, and it also has a high smoke point, which means it's useful for high-heat cooking as well. Canola oil is more budget-friendly if avocado oil is too expensive or difficult to find.

Provided by University of Kentucky

Citation: Healthy oils to keep in the kitchen (2017, July 10) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-07-healthy-oils-kitchen.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.