

## Cooking Oil in Healthy Diet

Many modern city dwellers are health conscious. They prefer choosing dishes prepared with less cooking oil when eating out or cooking their own meals. However, we should choose healthier cooking oil besides paying attention to the amount of cooking oil used. There are various kinds of cooking oil. Which cooking oil are considered as healthier? Let's analyse the composition of cooking oil.

### Analysis of Cooking Oil

Per 100 g	Saturated Fat (g)	Trans Fat (g)	Unsaturated Fat (g)
<b>Healthier Cooking Oil</b>			
Olive Oil	15.4	Not Available	78.3
Canola Oil	6.6	Not Available	87.9
Soybean Oil	14.9	Not Available	79.9
Corn Oil	13.4	Not Available	80.6
Peanut Oil	16.2	0.17	77.0
<b>Less Healthy Cooking Oil</b>			
Butter	50.5	2.98	26.4
Lard	39.2	Not Available	56.3
Coconut Oil	82.5	0.03	78.03
Palm Oil	49.3	Not Available	46.3
Margarine (80% fat and without added salt)	15.2	14.9	63.2
Vegetable Shortening	25	13.2	69.3

Source of Data: The Nutrient Data Laboratory, United States Department of Agriculture

### Healthier Cooking Oil

We should choose cooking oil with unsaturated fat as its major composition, such as olive oil, canola oil, soybean oil, corn oil and peanut oil. About 80% of the fat composition of these cooking oil are unsaturated fat. Moderate consumption of unsaturated fat can reduce the level of total cholesterol in the blood. Replacing saturated fat and trans fat with unsaturated fat can also lower the risk of coronary heart diseases. Nevertheless, each gram of cooking oil provides 9 kcal energy regardless of which kind of cooking oil. Therefore, besides choosing healthier cooking oil, we should still adopt low-fat cooking methods, such as steaming, boiling, blanching, baking and stir-frying with less cooking oil, to reduce fat intake. As regards to the amount, it is recommended to limit the edible oil used to no more than 2 teaspoons per person per meal when cooking.

### Less Healthy Cooking Oil

Butter, lard, coconut oil and palm oil contain higher proportion of saturated fat. Excessive intake of saturated fat can lead to an increase in the 'bad' cholesterol level in bloodstream, which may lead to hardening of arteries, stroke and heart diseases. Aside from containing a larger amount of saturated fat, margarine and vegetable shortening also contains considerably amount of trans fat. Consuming excessive margarine and vegetable shortening will not only raise the level of 'bad' cholesterol in blood, but also decrease the 'good' cholesterol level in blood. Therefore, we should consume as little of these as possible.

### More about Margarine

Recently, margarine made from healthier cooking oil have been available in the market. These kind of products contain minimal saturated fat and trans fat. Consumers are advised to read nutrition labels carefully before buying margarine and select products with less saturated fat and trans fat.