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The Fat Panel on Saturated Fat

The Fat Panel has been busy during February working on the issue of Saturated Fat. A review undertaken by The Fat Panel was published in the March issue of the British Nutrition Foundation's Nutrition Bulletin, exposing the shocking consequences of our current diet of too much 'bad' fat.

On 4th February 2009, The Fat Panel announced the publication of the BNF paper at Scott's restaurant in Mayfair, with a presentation given by Professor Bruce Griffin and Sian Porter. To receive copies of this presentation please see additional link or contact us at info@thefatpanel.org.uk.

Additionally you will find below a Press Release, 5th February 2009, "**New Clinical Review Illustrates why we need to cut our Saturated Fat Intake**" which was released to highlight the issues around the UK's consumption of saturated fat.

Finally, attached below is the Fat Panel's factsheet on how to reduce saturated fat in the diet which gives general tips and advice. Scroll down to see how you can cut your saturated fat intake....

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NEW CLINICAL REVIEW ILLUSTRATES WHY WE NEED TO CUT OUR SATURATED FAT INTAKE

A major new review, is published this week in the British Nutrition Foundation's *Nutrition Bulletin*, exposing the shocking consequences of our current diet of too much 'bad' fat¹. The UK is eating on average approximately 20% too much saturated fat (SFA)² which has been shown to be a major risk factor for developing many chronic diseases including Cardiovascular Disease and Type 2 Diabetes, as well as being linked to mental health disorders. The study was undertaken by The Fat Panel.

The literature review examines all the existing clinical data on saturated fat and has been undertaken to coincide with the Food Standards Agency's new public education campaign, which began on Monday. The aim of The Fat Panel and the Food Standards Agency is to reduce people's intake of saturated fat to within guideline levels by 2010. Each person taking one or two small and simple steps can make a huge difference.

Commenting on the study, Dr Anne Marie Minihane from The Fat Panel notes: "This paper really underlines just what a problem we have in the UK in terms of saturated fat intake and just how timely the FSA campaign is. We *have* to dramatically cut the amount of saturated fat we each eat.

"It is not all doom and gloom, however, because a few simple and painless changes to diet can make a huge difference to intake levels and health. Our hope is that if we cut the amount of saturated fat that people eat to guideline amounts we can save 3,500 lives a year³."

The North Karelia Project in Finland saw saturated fat consumption drop from 21% of dietary energy to 14% over 25 years. There was also a decline in smoking prevalence during this time and these healthy changes correlated with a reduction in mortality from coronary heart disease of 73%.

In Poland, consumption of saturated fat mainly from butter fell between 1990 and 1999 by 7% and intakes of unsaturated fats rose by 57%. It is believed that these dietary changes contributed to the reduced coronary heart disease incidence observed between 1990 and 2002, which declined from 340 per 100,000 to 212 per 100,000 (adults aged 45-64 years).

Top Tips for cutting saturated fat

- Grill, bake, poach or steam rather than frying and roasting.
- Use little or no extra fat when cooking. Use a non-stick pan. Measure oil with a tablespoon rather than pouring it straight from the bottle. Or, use a spray oil to cook
- Limit consumption of butter, lard and ghee as these are rich sources of saturated fat. Replace with small amounts of unsaturated fats such as rapeseed oil, olive oil, sunflower oil and corn oil or spreads made from these
- Choose lean cuts of meat and trim off any visible fat. Have chicken or turkey without the skin. Cut right back on processed meats such as spam, salami and corned beef and meat pies, sausage rolls and breaded meat or chicken. Fish tends to be low in saturated fat too - unless it's deep-fried or in a rich, creamy sauce of course!
- Add less meat to stews and casseroles and replace with vegetables, beans and pulses.
- Read labels on food products so you can choose those with less saturated fat - some labels show exactly how much saturated fat is in a portion
- Have pies with only one crust rather than two - either a lid or a base - because pastry is very high in fat.
- Using spreads instead of butter can substantially reduce the saturated fat you are eating because all spreads contain at least 25 per cent less saturated fat than butter with some offering up to 83 per cent less. For example, a 10g portion of typical sunflower oil margarine contains 1.2g saturated fat compared to 5.4g in the same-size portion of butter.
- Choose lower fat versions of dairy produce such as skimmed, 1% or semi-skimmed milk, reduced fat yogurt, lower fat cheeses (e.g. cottage cheese and fromage frais) or strong tasting cheese so you don't need to use so much.

-ends-

Notes to editors

- 1 P. Mason, S. C. Porter†, S. E. Berry‡, P. Stillman, C. Steele, A. Kirby, B.A. Griffin & A. M. Minihane of The Fat Panel (2009). *Saturated fatty acid consumption: outlining the scale of the problem and assessing the solutions*. British Nutrition Foundation *Nutrition Bulletin*, 34.
- 2 Henderson L, Gregory J & Irving K (2003). *The National Diet & Nutrition Survey (NDNS): Adults aged 19-64 years*. HMSO: London. **3** The Cabinet Office (January 2008). *Food: Analysis of the issues*.
- 3 The Cabinet Office (January 2008). *Food: Analysis of the issues*.



Dr Anne M Minihane BSc PhD

Dr Anne M Minihane is a Reader in Integrative Nutrition at the University of Reading, with a specific interest in nutrigenetics and the impact of genetic variation in determining the health benefits of dietary fat manipulation.



Dr Sarah Berry BSc Msc PhD RNutr

Dr Berry is a registered nutritionist, working at Kings College, and her specialist area of knowledge and research is lipid metabolism and coronary heart disease risk.



Dr Paul Stillman MB ChB DRCOG PGCHE

Dr Stillman is in general practice in Crawley, Sussex and is a general practice trainer with the British Postgraduate Medical Federation.



Dr Pamela Mason, PhD, MSc, MRPharmS
Dr Mason is a nutritionist and pharmacist.



Sian Porter MSc(ECON) BSc(HONS) RD
Sian is a registered dietician and holds an MSc in Health Economics.



Dr Chris Steele MBE, MB, ChB
Dr Steele is a general practitioner and is the regular 'doc' on ITV's 'This Morning' show.



Dr Amanda Kirby MBBS MRCGP MFFP
Dr Kirby is a GP in Cardiff, with specific experience in community paediatrics.



Dr. Bruce A. Griffin BSc PhD RPHNutr
Dr Griffin is a Reader in Nutritional Metabolism in the Faculty of Health & Medical Sciences at the University of Surrey, with expert knowledge of lipid metabolism, diet and cardiovascular disease.

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General tips to cut sat fat intake:

- 1.** Try having smaller portions of cheese or eating it less often. When you do have cheese, grate it as you are likely to eat less.
- 2.** Grate your cheese – you'll eat less.
- 3.** Try to limit the amount of buns, cakes, pastries, pies and biscuits you eat.
- 4.** Try to limit the amount of sausages, salami, pâté and beefburgers you eat, as these are generally high in saturated fat and often high in salt too.
- 5.** Remember that meat products in pastry, such as pies and sausage rolls, are high in saturated fat, as they may contain fatty cuts of meat *and* the fat in pastry.
- 6.** If you are going to have something 'sweet', instead of cakes or biscuits, try having a currant bun, scone or some malt loaf, plain or with lower fat or reduced fat spread.
- 7.** Snack foods can be high in saturated fat and salt and should only be seen as a treat.
- 8.** We can enjoy chocolate treats every now and again, but think about how often and how much you eat of them instead of getting into a habit of eating them every day.

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In the supermarket....

- 1.** Choose low and lower-fat varieties of dairy foods such as semi-skimmed, 1% fat milk or skimmed milk, low-fat yoghurts and lower-fat cheeses.
- 2.** Whatever you are buying, check the label to see if there is an alternative with lower saturated fat.
- 3.** Go for turkey and chicken without the skin. Opt for fish occasionally instead of meat or choose a veggie option.
- 4.** Have pies with only one crust rather than two – either a lid or a base – because pastry is very high in saturated fat.
- 5.** Choosing a fat spread with lower total fat per 100g generally means that the saturated fat content per 100g will be lower. Go for polyunsaturated or mono-unsaturated spreads where possible and not dairy based spreads.
- 6.** Check the label when buying meat as there can be big variances between the types of meat, cut of meat and how it has been prepared. The more white you can see on meat, the more fat it contains. So, for example, back bacon has less than half the saturated fat of streaky bacon.
- 7.** Compare labels when choosing cheese as different varieties of cheese can have different saturated fat levels. Soft cheese tends to have less than hard cheese.
- 8.** Watch out for sauces which may increase the saturated fat levels of a food.
- 9.** Buy healthy snacks like fruit (dried/tinned in juice/fresh) malt loaf, fruit bread rather than cakes and biscuits. Take healthy snacks to work, school or in the car so you have something to hand if you are feeling hungry

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Easy switches....

1. Swap a Danish pastry for a bagel or a crumpet.
2. Swap creamy or cheesy sauces for tomato or vegetable based sauces.
3. Swap a large whole milk coffee for a regular 'skinny' latte.
4. Swap savoury snacks for a handful of nuts.
5. Swap a pastry topping for a savoury or sweet scone or a crumble topping.
6. Swap butter for vegetable oil based spreads.
7. Swap a chocolate biscuit for a fruit bun.
8. Swap red meat for fish or turkey/chicken without the skin on.
9. Swap cream for lower fat fromage frais natural yoghurt or crème fraiche.

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In the kitchen....

1. Wherever possible grill meat instead of frying it and cut any visible fat and skin off before cooking.
2. Use a non-stick pan and non stick foil to avoid adding fat. If you need to add a liquid oil, use an oil spray filled with unsaturated oil or measure the oil using a spoon, rather than just 'glugging' it into the pan.
3. Make mashed potato with low fat spread and semi-skimmed milk.
4. If you're using cheese to flavour a dish or a sauce, you could try using a very strong-tasting cheese, such as mature Cheddar, as you'll need less. Also look out for some of the great tasting reduced fat versions that are available.
5. Use unsaturated oils such as olive, sunflower or rapeseed oils instead of butter, lard and ghee in cooking.

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