

## **Fats and Essential Fatty Acids in the Diet**

There is the great deal of controversy around the truth of including fats and oils in our diet. Many people say that fat and oil cause some common degenerative diseases. The reality is that unhealthy oils create unhealthy people and healthy oils build health in people. Our brain, nervous system and every cell in our body contains come form or fat or fatty acids. Therefore, we need the correct amount and type for our body in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Just like protein is comprised of amino acids, fats are comprised of fatty acids. Some fatty acids are essential to our diet, without which life cannot be sustained and can't be made by our body, hence the name EFAs (essential fatty acids). They are vital especially to hormone production and healthy development of every cell in our body. When we use trans fatty acids that have been hydrogenated (bubbled with hydrogen gas to increase shelf life in processed foods) this destroys the structure of the EFA's. When this occurs, this creates a host of health issues such as pain and inflammation and even preventing the cells to do their jobs properly.

But what about natural healthy oils? Of primary concern with fats and oils is the condition of rancidity. When oxygen and light are allowed to penetrate, the oil is then broken down and becomes rancid. For this reason great care must be taken with unsaturated fats and oils to prevent oxygenation, heat and light from damaging the molecules. In general rancidity contributes to premature aging and poor skin health, and subsequent loss of membrane health affecting every cellular function in the body.

So what should we eat? We must consume the naturally occurring oils and fats that are properly protected from light, heat and oxygen. When buying oils, make sure they are in dark glass containers and are stored in cool, dark, dry conditions. Organic olive oil, butter, coconut oil and sesame oil are especially good for our health. Non-food source oils (such as cotton seed, borage, and canola or rape seed) as well as hydrogenation oil should, ideally, be avoided completely. .