

Chewonthis.org.uk

Plant sources of healthier fats

People tend to think that all fat is bad, but we all need to eat some fat to keep healthy. The healthiest fats are usually those that are liquid or soft. These are oils like sunflower oil and olive oil used in cooking. Healthy fat is also found in a lot of nuts and seeds, and in oily fish like mackerel. The fats that are less healthy are easy to recognise. They're usually solid or hard at room temperature.

Butter, lard and hydrogenated fat are all hard fats. There is also hard fat in the fatty parts of meat, like bacon rind. These foods contain saturated fat. Over a long time, if you eat a lot of saturated fat, it can damage your heart.

But what if you're a vegetarian and don't eat fish? The table below gives you information about some of food plants that contain the good fats.

Food (serving size)	Omega-3 (g) (LNA)	Omega-6 (g) (LA)
Oils		
Flaxseed (linseed) oil, 1 tbsp	8.0	2.2
Rapeseed (canola) oil, 1 tbsp	1.3	2.8
Walnut oil, 1 tbsp	1.4	7.2
Soy oil, 1 tbsp	0.9	6.9
Wheat germ oil	0.9	7.5
Nuts and seeds		
Flaxseeds (linseeds), ground, 2 tbsp	3.2	0.8
Walnuts, 2 tbsp	1.0	5.4
Vegetables, Fruits and Legumes		
Soybeans, cooked, 1 cup	1.1	7.8
Tofu, firm, ½ cup	0.7	5.0
Tofu, medium, ½ cup	0.4	2.9
Soy milk, 1 cup	0.4	2.9
Berries, 1 cup	0.2	0.2
Peas, ½ cup	0.2	0.2
Legumes, ½ cup	0.05	0.05
Green leafy vegetables (broccoli, kale, Brussels sprouts, leeks, spinach, Chinese greens, salad greens, 1 cup raw or ½ cup cooked)	0.1	0.03
Grains		
Oat germ, 2 tbsp	0.2	1.6
Wheat germ, 2 tbsp	0.1	0.8

Note: 1 cup = 112g
 Sources: US National Institutes of Health, EFA Education website⁶⁶
 Davis B., *Essential Fatty Acids in Vegetarian Nutrition*⁶⁷

This table is reproduced from the report 'Fishing for Facts', published by the Vegetarian and Vegan Foundation, www.vegetarian.org.uk