

Nutrition Tip #2 - Hydrogenated oils (also called trans fats):

When food companies want to extend the shelf-life of processed food they take liquid vegetable oil and hydrogenate it (pump it full of hydrogen). This makes the oil solid at room temperature and unlikely to go “bad”. The resulting synthesized fat, called trans fat, is different than the natural fats found in food. The naturally-occurring fats, saturated, polyunsaturated and monounsaturated, should be limited in a healthful diet due to their cholesterol increasing properties. There is evidence however, that a certain, small amount of unsaturated fat can be beneficial in a normal diet. Trans fats, on the other hand, should be avoided if at all possible because they not only increase the number of low density lipoproteins (the “bad” kind), but they also decrease the number of high density lipoproteins (the “good” kind). Therefore, consumption of high amounts of trans fats increases the risk of coronary heart disease. Yuck! Hydrogenated fats are commonly found in processed crackers and cookies.