Fat Facts

Total fat: Every fat or oil is made up of a combination of saturated, trans, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated fats. Those fats all are high in calories, but some are bad for the heart and some are not.

Artery-clogging fats that increase blood cholesterol:

Saturated fat is found in foods like milk, cheese, ice cream, ground beef, steak, pork, coconut oil, and palm oil.

Trans fat is formed when vegetable oils are hardened into margarine or shortening. It is found in foods like margarine, shortening, fried foods like french fries and fried chicken, doughnuts, cookies, pastries, and crackers.

Fats that do not clog arteries:

Monounsaturated fat is found in higher levels in olive, canola, and peanut oils.

Polyunsaturated fat is found in higher levels in soybean, corn, safflower, and sunflower oils.

For further information, please contact Margo G. Wootan, D.Sc., Senior Scientist, Center for Science in the Public Interest, (202) 332-9110, ext. 354.