

# Hydrogenated Oil

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I want to talk about one of the most common food additives in our diet—partially hydrogenated vegetable oil. Some fats in our diet are good and healthy, others are not so good. Of all the fats in our diet, hydrogenated vegetable oils are the very worst. The reason they're so bad is because they contain toxic trans fatty acids. Trans fatty acids are fat molecules that have been chemically altered. These deformed fatty acids wreck havoc in our bodies. Recent research has shown that they contribute to cancer, heart disease, diabetes, MS, and many other health problems. They are far more dangerous than any other fat known. A study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* it reported that trans fatty acids cause at least 30,000 premature deaths in the United States each year.

Because of these dangers, many health organizations have pressured the FDA to enact a regulation requiring food manufactures to include the amount of trans fatty acids on package labels. Before taking this step, however, the FDA waited three years for the Institute of Medicine to study the issue. After a detailed review of all the medical research on trans fatty acids, the Institute of Medicine released their findings. They announced that *no level of trans fat is safe to consume!*

This announcement came as a surprise because usually the government agencies recommend what they consider to be a safe limit of consumption for toxic food additives. In this case, however, they stated that no level is safe. That means we should avoid trans fatty acids completely.

Where do you find trans fatty acids? Trans fatty acids are found in all hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, including margarine and shortening. Partially hydrogenated soybean oil is our most common source of trans fatty acids. Almost every packaged, convenience food in the grocery store contains one or more of these sources of trans fats. Some common food sources for trans fatty acids include bread, cookies, crackers, chips, pies, French fries, pizzas, peanut butter, cake frosting, candy, and ice cream. **Read package labels, if it lists partially hydrogenated oil, don't buy it!**