



## **HYDROGENATED OILS**

Many processed foods are made from hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated vegetable oils. Hydrogenation is a process whereby liquid oils from polyunsaturated fats, primarily soybean oil, are made into solid fats, thereby giving it a longer shelf life. In partial hydrogenation, half of the polyunsaturated fatty acids remain. Hydrogenated oils are found in roughly 80% of processed foods, such as:

- fried foods
- baked goods
- margarine
- salad oils
- fruit roll-ups
- granola
- peanut butter
- pretzels,
- fish sticks, and other frozen foods.

While first touted for their health benefits, recent research has shown that hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated oils become similar to transfats and behave like saturated fats in the body. They raise bad cholesterol (LDL) levels and deplete good cholesterol (HDL) levels in the body, thereby increasing the risk of heart disease.

Recent research also indicates that the prevalence of many health issues we are seeing today is due to a lack of Omega 3 fatty acids in our diets. When we eat hydrogenated oils we are eating fats from polyunsaturated oils, which are rich in Omega 6 fatty acids. This imbalance has been shown to cause heart disease, diabetes, and other inflammatory conditions.

How to Avoid Hydrogenated or Partially Hydrogenated Vegetable Oils:

- Read food labels and avoid any products that have vegetable shortening hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils
- Stick to natural butter or olive oil when cooking
- Eat fresh, seasonal foods

For More Information, check out:

What to Eat by Marion Nestle, PhD

The Queen of Fats: Why Omega 3s Were Removed from the Western Diet and What We Can do to Replace Them, by Susan Allport

Dr. Andrew Weil's Guide to Heart Health, by Dr. Andrew Weil