Fats: The Basics
Dietary fat is found in both plant and animal foods. Fats provide essential fatty acids, meaning the body does not make them on its own but needs them for everyday functions. Fats also provide the ability for the body to absorb the fat soluble vitamins A, D, E and K. Dietary fat has a higher concentration of calories than protein or carbohydrates.

All fats are a unique blend of saturations. For example, butter is a mix of about 65% saturated fats, 30% monounsaturated fats, and 5% polyunsaturated fats. This means that no two fats are alike!

Types of Fats
Polyunsaturated: Polyunsaturated fats are found in the highest amounts in nuts, seeds and fatty fish like salmon or tuna. You may have heard of Omega-3 fats, which are a type of polyunsaturated fat.

Monounsaturated: Monounsaturated fats are found in the highest amounts in avocados, olives and olive oil, peanuts and peanut butter, and canola oil.

Saturated: Saturated fats are found in the highest amounts in coconut and palm kernel oils, butter and animal fats.

Trans: Trans fats are unsaturated fats found in the highest amounts in foods that contain partially hydrogenated oils. This fat is man-made, and found in processed foods.

Healthy Intake
Oils, fish, nuts, seeds and avocados contain fats that are part of a healthy eating pattern. Choose these sources as part of your meal when building your plate.
**Dietary Balance**

Like any food, too much fat in the diet can cause weight gain and increase our chances for developing certain diseases. The following tips will help you to choose the best types of fat in the proper amounts.

**Limit Saturated and Trans Fats:**
- Use herbs and oil instead of butter or margarine for flavor.
- Broiling, grilling, roasting and poaching are healthy ways to reduce fat while cooking meat.
- Trim the fat you see on meat, turkey and chicken before cooking, and remove the skin from chicken and turkey.
- Drain the grease from cooked ground meats. Add seasonings to your recipe to add back flavor.
- Choose lean meats such as fish, turkey or chicken breast, lean roast beef, cuts of beef or pork with “loin” or “round” in their name, or ham instead of bologna, salami, sausages or hot dogs.
- Use skim milk instead of whole or 2% milk.
- Skip dessert, or choose a desert with fruit instead of frosting.
- Limit foods described as: crispy, fried, creamy, gravy or cheesy
- Order a smaller burger or grilled chicken sandwich. Add lettuce, tomato and skip the extra sauce and mayo.

**Choose Monounsaturated and Polyunsaturated Fats:**
- Order a salad without cheese. Instead, opt for nuts or avocado and ask for dressing on the side.
- Order veggies on your pizza, and request half the cheese.
- Enjoy nuts in proper portions of ¼ cup, or a small handful.

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**Guacamole**

8 servings

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<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>avocado, peeled and pitted</td>
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<tr>
<td>¾ c.</td>
<td>non-fat yogurt, plain</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 tsp.</td>
<td>lemon juice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 T.</td>
<td>salsa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dash</td>
<td>salt and pepper</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. In a small mixing bowl, mash together all the ingredients with a fork until well blended.
2. Serve right away with tortilla chips

**Nutrition information per serving:** Calories 45, Total Fat 3 g (5% DV), Saturated Fat 0.5 g (3% DV), Cholesterol 0 mg (0% DV), Sodium 20 mg (1% DV), Total Carbohydrate 4 g (1% DV), Dietary Fiber 2 g (8% DV), Sugars 1 g, Protein 2 g, Vitamin A 2%, Vitamin C 6%, Calcium 2%, Iron 0%

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This material was funded in part by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Expanded Food & Nutrition Program (EFNEP). The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, call 1-800-430-3244.

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**UNL Nutrition Education Program**

[Eat Well 1000 2000](http://unlextension.unl.edu/2013/03/13/eatwell-1000-2000/)

[45% of US Adults Overweight or Obese](http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/adult/prevalence.html)

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