

Cut the
Trans Fat



Your Heart Will
Thank You

Why the Health Department Proposes That Restaurants Phase Out Artificial Trans Fat

PROPOSAL OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Artificial trans fat is unhealthy.

Artificial trans fat is invisible and dangerous. While today we are protected from environmental hazards such as lead paint and asbestos, artificial trans fat remains a common hazard in our food. Trans fat increases the risk of heart disease, a leading cause of death among New Yorkers. *There is no safe level of trans fat in our diets.*

Based on the most conservative estimates, artificial trans fat kills at least 500 New Yorkers each year, more than the number killed each year in motor vehicle crashes.

Leading health organizations – including the American Heart Association, the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine, the World Health Organization, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – recommend that people strictly limit consumption of trans fat.

We can lower the risk of heart attacks by replacing artificial trans fat with healthier alternatives.

Restaurants are a major source of trans fat.

New Yorkers dine out a lot – more than a third of our daily calories come from food eaten away from home. On average, Americans consume almost 6 grams of trans fat each day. A single fast food meal can contain more than 10 grams of trans fat!

Restaurant customers have no practical way to know whether food they order contains artificial trans fat or not.

To protect the health of New Yorkers and save lives, the Health Department is proposing a partial phase-out of artificial trans fat in restaurants.

The proposal allows restaurants 6 months to switch to oils, margarines, and shortening that have less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving. After 18 months, all food products must contain less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving. Packaged food items still in the manufacturer's original packaging when served to consumers will be exempt.

This proposal follows a one-year education campaign to help restaurants voluntarily reduce trans fat. Despite this effort, trans fat use remains widespread.

Trans fat is replaceable.

Artificial trans fat can be replaced with readily available heart-healthy oils (such as corn, canola, and soy), without changing the taste of foods.

Federal regulations have led to widespread reformulation of packaged foods, demonstrating the feasibility of removing trans fat from virtually all foods.

Many companies and restaurants have already made the switch.

Major food companies such as Kraft, Frito-Lay, Smuckers, and Tyson Foods already have trans fat-free product lines on supermarket shelves. For example, Oreo cookies, Goldfish crackers, and Fritos corn chips now have *0 grams of trans fat*. Consumers still enjoy the taste, and the market for trans fat-free foods continues to grow.

Some nationwide restaurant chains have already reduced or eliminated artificial trans fat. For example, all Wendy's restaurants now fry with trans fat-free oil. Many New York City restaurants also have cut trans fat out of their oils and spreads – or never used it in the first place.

Food will taste the same — but your heart will know the difference.

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