



Letter to the editor: The Pundit Speaks  
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February 7, 2010

## “Saturated Fat: No Link to Heart Disease in New Study”

Confusing and conflicting healthcare data is everywhere. There are cautions against consuming harmful processed sugar, breathing pollutant-containing air, eating mercury laced fish, buying trans fat-containing snack foods, gulping down any type of fast (junk) food and drinking water with hidden contaminants of hormones, drug residues, pesticides or herbicides. Now, enters the conflicted subject of the consumption of saturated fats in meats and dairy products. We have been warned for years of the alleged dangers of eating saturated (single bonded) fats and have been inundated with messages about the direct link between saturated fats and heart disease. However, a new analysis of 21 published studies, that included a total of nearly 348,000 adults, in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, finds no clear link between people's intake of saturated fat and their risk of developing cardiovascular (heart) disease. Because studies have shown that saturated fat can raise blood levels of "bad" LDL cholesterol (a risk factor for heart disease and stroke), experts have advised people to markedly limit their intake of fatty meat, butter and full-fat dairy products. Yet, the combined results of these 21 prior studies, did not find clear evidence that higher saturated fat intakes led to higher risks of heart disease or stroke. This is great news for all of us who love a good steak. It appears that the thinking on diet and overall heart health is drifting away from a focus on single nutrients, like saturated or unsaturated fats, and toward "dietary patterns." In short, diets are moving from lots of processed sugar, bread and red meat, towards the Mediterranean or "prudent" dietary pattern, which is high in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and fish. Surprisingly, investigators found that there was no difference in the risks of heart disease and stroke between people with the lowest and highest intakes of saturated fat. However, this study was an epidemiologic study, which can have flawed results. I strongly suggest that you do some research yourself and start with books by Anthony Colpo, *The Great Cholesterol Con* and Uffe Ravnskov's book, *The Cholesterol Myth*. Both books are well referenced and offer a fresh view of the questionable link between saturated fats and heart disease. Get the data and make your own decisions.

In the America that I love, most issues usually have two sides to an argument. We realize that the cholesterol and heart disease issue is far from clear, as new theories or "educated guesses" are introduced all of the time. In the meantime, it is best to avoid extremes. Be sure to eat a well balanced, nutritious diet with lots of fruits and vegetables. Be careful with powerful cholesterol lowering medications and always use good ole' common sense.

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