

BUTTER FOR YOUR HEALTH?

YES! BUTTER CAN BE GOOD FOR YOU!

Dr. Patrick Healey – Jan. 2017

For a long time, society and the media have propagated the myth that butter is bad for your health and causes heart disease because it contains saturated fats. Unfortunately, it is not that simple or straight forward. Whether a fat is healthy or harmful to health is not as simple as whether it is saturated or unsaturated. It depends on where it comes from, how it is processed, how it is stored and how it is used. Any oil or fat can be healthy or toxic based on these factors. Butter, when made well and from a quality source, is a healthy food! Let's look more closely at the factors that determine its quality.

Tips for Healthy Butter:

- ✓ Get organic (or equivalent) *always* when you are consuming butter and/or other raw dairy. Harmful chemicals, like pesticides and hormones, are concentrated in fat/lipids. These chemicals can lead to multiple endocrine health issues such as thyroid issues, obesity, hormonal imbalances, infertility, and diabetes.
- ✓ Get your butter from grass-fed cows.
- ✓ Get raw or low-temperature pasteurized butter. If you can't...try to get a cultured butter. This will ensure that the enzymes, proteins, fats, beneficial bacteria are preserved or replaced.
- ✓ Store in refrigerator in stainless steel, glass, ceramic, or safe plastic (#2 and #4) container.
- ✓ Do **not** overheat your butter (>350°F) or allow it to sit out in the open for long periods of time.
- ✓ Butter contains short-chain fatty Acids (SCFAs), that provide energy and nourishment to the cells of the large intestine, and conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), which has shown positive effects on cancer, asthma, inflammation, insulin resistance, heart disease and body composition to name a few.
- ✓ Don't let people tell you butter is **not** healthy and causes heart disease. This is wrong! ([Click here for more](#))

Source Quality: Butter comes from the processing of cream from milk, usually from cows. Butter is only as good as the source it comes from. If it comes from sick and improperly cared for cows, it will be poor quality and potentially harmful. If it comes from cows that are healthy and cared for, it is healthy. One general guideline in dealing with dairy and other products with fat in them is to ALWAYS get them from a quality, organic (or equivalent) source. This is because chemicals, hormones, and pesticides are fat/lipid-soluble, meaning that they mix well with fat and therefore are stored in higher amounts in fat. If you get regular, non-organic butter or dairy product, you are getting a higher concentration of these types of chemicals and subjecting yourself to their disrupting and damaging health effects ([read more here](#)).



Processing: The processing of the milk and butter affects the nutrient and quality of the butter. Pasteurization destroys enzymes, proteins, fats, and microflora that are beneficial to health and may even

create harmful molecules in the process ([read more here!](#)). Healthily raised cows are generally not subjected to the bacteria and health issues that come with mass industrial farming and production. Try to find raw or low-temperature pasteurized dairy. It might be hard to find, (and may be even illegal in some states) but it's best to obtain, when you can or use an alternative. You can also obtain butters and creams that are cultured after pasteurization which replaces the beneficial microorganisms/bacteria that were destroyed in the process. Another practice in the industry is the addition of a colorant (either a chemical or sometimes a natural pigment) to the butter to make it more appealing. This, in my opinion is not needed and is likely harmful if it is a non-natural additive. Butter naturally has light-yellow color variations depending on the feed of the animal.

Storage and Use: How you store and use butter is very important if you are wanting to get the maximum benefit from it. Storage of butter in the refrigerator will make it last longer and keep it from becoming rancid and spoiling. Don't leave butter out all day, even if you want to soften it for easier use. Leaving butter exposed to light and oxygen causes it to oxidize and leads to rancidity and therefore harms your body. Store the butter either wrapped up in its original paper/foil or in a non-porous container like stainless steel, glass or ceramic. While there is no guarantee of safe plastics. The safest are either a #2(HDPE) or #4(LDPE). These types of plastics are not known to cause any health issues like other kinds of plastic which can leach harmful chemicals into your food and beverages. Do *not* overheat butter! Butter has a smoke point of around 350°F. This means that the oil will be destroyed and start smoking at this temperature. You should *never* let oils reach the point where they begin to smoke. Most deep-frying occurs at or above 365°F. Keep your cooking temperature at a medium level and don't let the butter reach its smoke point. If you need to cook at higher temperatures use a healthy oil with a higher smoke point like avocado (520°F) oil.

Health Benefits of Butter: Butter contains types of saturated fat known as short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs) and medium-chain fatty acids/triglycerides (MCFAs/MCTs). Because of their fatty acid length, they are easily absorbed directly into the body and utilized for energy. Butyric acid is the main SCFA in butter and is not only found in high concentrations in butter, but our microbiota (beneficial bacteria) in our colons make SCFAs from the fiber we consume...that's assuming you are consuming fiber and that your microflora is healthy ;). Yet another reason to take probiotics!. SCFAs are healthy for your large intestine and MCTs have anti-viral, antibacterial, anti-fungal, and anti-cancer properties. But don't the calories from butter and coconut oil cause weight gain? No...not exactly, because of the length of the fatty acids (SCFAs and MCFAs), your body processes them differently and shunts them down a path to be used directly for energy production for your body, and *not* readily stored as fat.

Butter also contains conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) which is higher in concentration in healthy grass-fed cows. CLA has shown promising results in use to treat asthma, cancer, high blood pressure, insulin resistance, heart disease, and overweight individuals to name a few.

Additionally, butter contains many fat-soluble vitamins like Vitamin A, Vitamin D, and Vitamin E. It is especially rich in Vitamin A which is vital for immune function and necessary for growth and repair of the tissues of your mouth, digestive tract, kidneys, bladder, lungs and your skin. One pat of butter contains about 125 IU of vitamin A and 1 tablespoon contains about 355IU. A great source of vitamin A!

Unfortunately, fat has gotten a bad rap and has been wrongly accused of causing weight gain and all sorts of chronic diseases. The truth of the matter is that fat is a necessary nutrient and needed for proper functioning of the body. The real issue is getting the right type and quality of fat. A major contributor to gaining weight

and chronic diseases like cancer, diabetes, heart disease, chronic pain, chronic infections, is our over-consumption of refined sugar and artificial sweeteners...another topic for another time.

A brand that I love, use, and recommend is [Kerrygold Butter](#) (I have no affiliation or monetary endorsements with this brand), but there are many, many brands of butter out there that are quality.

Use my tips to select the best one and start enjoying the benefits as well as the taste of butter!

Resources to further your knowledge

Weston A. Price Foundation: <http://www.westonaprice.org/know-your-fats/why-butter-is-better/>

www.Realmilk.com – to find real, raw milk in your area

Mercola.com:

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2010/12/07/why-is-butter-better.aspx>

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2014/03/24/butter-consumption.aspx>

Safe Plastics: <http://www.babygreenthumb.com/p-122-safe-plastic-numbers-guide.aspx>

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