



[In This Newsletter](#)

Quote of the Month - Cyndi O'Meara

Message from Cyndi - National Health Authorities Are Failing In Their Jobs To Keep Us Safe

Seminar's Coming Up - Cyndi's Public Speaking Around the Country

Recipe's of the Month - Chili Taco Salad AND Chocolate Chip Cookies

Quote of the Month - Cyndi O'Meara

"If you don't want to be a statistic, don't do what everyone else is doing. The world has changed! We have to think and act differently. Become informed and make educated decisions on you health and the foods we eat."

Message from Cyndi - National Health Authorities Are Failing In Their Jobs To Keep Us Safe

The last couple of weeks have been a whirl wind of troubling news with regards to nutrition and health.

Last week Channel 9's Brisbane Extra called me to make a statement regarding the latest information on trans fats. It will be aired Monday night in SE Queensland. Then on Tuesday the 12th of August 2008, I'll be on Channel 10's 9AM program with Kim and David at around 9.45am talking about trans fats and hydrogenated vegetable oils.

I was so excited about the calls as I thought after years of talking about the dangers of partially hydrogenated vegetable oils (trans fats) they were finally going to be banned from the Australian shelves and I wanted to be a part of this historic event. Of course, that was my conclusion, as for the last eighteen months it has been public knowledge that trans fats are a very dangerous fat and that saturated fats were not after all the big ogre. In fact we know if there is a 2% increase in trans fats in the diet then the chances of heart disease increase by 23%.

But I was wrong! In 2003 Denmark banned trans fats in foods available for sale, then in 2006 New York restaurants banned the use of trans fats in their foods and now Arnold

Schwarzenegger, the Governor of California has asked by 2009 that there be no more trans fats allowed in the food supply in the state of California. Many other countries are following suit, however our food authority in Australia and New Zealand, ANZFA (Australia and New Zealand Food Authority) says that they are more worried about saturated fats in our diet and felt that the Australian public were only eating a very small percentage of trans fats.

Evidence now points to the fact that there is no safe level of trans fats. Even if the Australian public is eating just a small amount of trans fats, it is still too much.

Trans Fats were produced to make Candles!

The process of partial hydrogenation, which creates trans fats was first developed by Proctor and Gamble to create a higher melt point and longer shelf life and cheaper fat for the manufacturing of candles. When electricity took over there was no need for the candle, so then this new vegetable fat was transferred from making candles to preparing food.

There has been rumblings in the scientific world since 1978 that there was something not right about partial hydrogenated vegetable oil (trans fats) and that it had repercussions to health. By the 80's more people were questioning margarine but by then margarine was being marketed as the healthy alternative to butter and it became unstoppable. It was not until 18 months ago, 30 years after we knew something wasn't right, that the general public learnt the dangers of trans fats. Slowly but surely there has been a realisation but for many it's too late as their health has already been compromised.

The Heart Foundation, which is a body that most people trust, has given margarine and other foods with partial hydrogenated vegetable oil the tick of approval for many decades. When the controversy surrounding trans fats emerged, in order for the manufacturers of margarine to keep the heart foundations tick of approval they had to reduce the trans fat content in margarine to one percent or less. Just 18 months ago margarine had a 13-17% content of trans fats here in Australia, in the US it was upto 35% trans fat.

After this bungle of allowing an unsafe food into the Australian diet, how can we trust the Heart Foundation again or for that matter the ANZFA (Australian and New Zealand Food Authority). We trust these bodies to keep us safe from bad additives and to make sure that what we are eating is safe and good for us. I'm a nutritionist, not an organisation with millions of dollars and an army of people to conduct research and I was writing and talking publicly about the dangers of partially hydrogenated vegetable oil back in the early 1990's. It is a disgrace, and the Australian and New Zealand public need an apology. Kevin Rudd apologised to the stolen children and now it's time for his health department and the Heart Foundation to apologise to the Australian people for being inept in deciphering what is fact from fiction.

How is a Trans Fat Made?

A trans fat is found in nature in small amounts in some animal fat. In it's natural form it has anti cancer properties.

A trans fat produced as a result of partial hydrogenation of a vegetable oil (to make it solid at room temperature) has devastating effects on the body including; increase in cancer, diabetes,

obesity and an increased chance of heart disease, it has also been implicated in the increase in multiple sclerosis and learning dysfunction in children along with macular degeneration.

A naturally occurring trans fat is not the same as a trans fat created as a result of partial hydrogenation!!

What is Hydrogenation?

Hydrogenation is a high tech process. Vegetable seeds are cleaned and bleached to remove all colour, taste, smells and impurities. The liquid vegetable oil is then heated to high temperatures and a catalyst (commonly nickel, but could be palladium, platinum or rhodium) is added. Hydrogen is bubbled through the liquid. The mixture is then filtered to remove the metal, remove any rancid odour, leaving hydrogenated vegetable oil.

Water, whey, salt, vitamins, colourings, flavourings and emulsifiers may then be added to produce margarine.

Partial Hydrogenation creates trans fats, hydrogenation creates saturated fats. If you partially hydrogenate a vegetable oil then it has a soft texture like margarine and has a very long shelf life. If you hydrogenate a vegetable oil it becomes very hard and has to be mixed with liquid vegetable oils in order to make a margarine like substance. It also has a very long shelf life and that is why it is so popular with food manufacturers like Uncle Toby's, White Wings, Sanitarium and the like. So instead of margarine and many of our vegetable oils being partially hydrogenated, they are now completely hydrogenated. I do not, for one minute, believe them to be a safe product and would not recommend them for people to consume on a regular or daily basis.

If you go to the supermarket and be diligent in reading your food labels you will notice that in the following foods (this is not a complete list) there will be some sort of fat;

- most baked foods
- salad dressings
- fried foods
- pie crusts of sweet and savoury pies
- bread
- cake mixes
- peanut butter
- cakes
- crackers
- biscuit
- chocolate

The fat will be called by the following names

- shortening
- vegetable fat
- vegetable oil
- hydrogenated vegetable oil

- partially hydrogenated vegetable oil
- margarine.

Basically they are all the same, they all have a degree of hydrogenation. Last week I called as many manufacturers as I could and everyone of them told me that the vegetable oil that they used had been hydrogenated.

This is a huge bungle by the health and food authorities of Australia. How many other things have the authorities been wrong about. The fact that they still allow aspartame (nutri sweet) in our food supply appalls me. The fact that the UK is fazing out 6 food colours due to their link with hyperactivity and food sensitivities in children yet ANZFA are doing nothing about it. It makes me wonder if they are really acting in our best interest.

Here is another authority that is letting us down. The Royal Australian College of Physicians has released for public comment the new Federal Draft ADHD guidelines. The guidelines are recommending that parents and teachers be told that complimentary or alternative treatments for ADD and ADHD may be of little or no benefit. This includes diet, eliminating food additives and preservatives, or eliminating sugar the addition of food supplements like essential fatty acids and homeopathy as well as targeting Chiropractic as basically a complete waste of time. Do they think we're stupid, or are they???? Their only answer to the problem is ritalin and dexamphetamine, which are in the same category as cocaine, opium and morphine.

The authorities we trust as a nation are now in question as to their motives and ethics. Are they really about helping the nation's health or is it just all about money and ego.

How Can You Avoid Trans Fats and Hydrogenated Fats?

1. Avoid all foods with the following ingredients listed

- partially hydrogenated vegetable oil,
- hydrogenated vegetable oil,
- shortening.
- vegetable oil (If you are unsure of a product that says vegetable oil, then call the manufacturer to find out if they have hydrogenated it)
- vegetable fat
- margarine

2. When eating out ask your restaurant what type of fat they use, ask your baker what type of fat they use.

mono-diglycerides (471) has also been hydrogenated, but this is in minute amounts, but still worth avoiding

Happy Changing Habits
Cyndi O'Meara

Seminar's Coming Up - Cyndi's Public Speaking Around the Country

Brisbane Public Health Seminar - Carindale, QLD

Tuesday 12th August

Time: 7-9 pm

Where: Church of the Nazarene Hall

Corner of Bethel Street and Meadowlands Road Carindale 4152

(07) 3843 4300

Tickets: \$20, Available Online: www.changinghabits.com.au

North Shore Temple Emanuel's Women 4 Women Group on Health and Wellbeing - Chatswood, NSW

Monday 25th August

7:00pm – 9:00pm

North Shore Temple Emanuel

28 Chatswood Ave, Chatswood 2067

Visitors are welcome, but must register at (02) 9419-7011

\$10 per ticket

Joshua Wellness Practice - Telopea, NSW

Tuesday 26th August

7:00pm – 9:00pm

Telopea Christian Centre

16 Shortland St, Telopea (Sydney)

Tickets: \$20, Available Online: www.changinghabits.com.au or through Joshua Wellness Practice (02) 9631-0411

Changing Habits Changing Lives Combating Stress, Anxiety and Depression with Food - New Lambton, NSW

Wednesday 27th August

7:00pm – 9:00pm

West Leagues Club – Convention Centre

88 Hobart Road,

New Lambton

Waratah Room A

Tickets: \$20.00, Available Online: www.changinghabits.com.au

QLD Health - Brisbane, QLD

Friday 29th August 2008

Strategic Growth Partners - Brisbane, QLD

Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th September 2008

National Builders Group - Perth, WA

Monday 15th September 2008

Thermomix - Perth, WA

Monday 15th and Tuesday 16th September 2008

Time and Place TBA

Seventh Day Adventist Conference - Grassy Head, NSW

Monday 6th - Thursday 9th October 2008

Global Wellness Summit - Brisbane, QLD

Friday 10th - Monday 13th October 2008

Bloomhill Cancer - Sunshine Coast, QLD

Thursday 6th November 2008

National Association of Prospective Student Advisors 10th Biennial Conference - Twin Waters, QLD

Thursday 13th November 2008

Regional Women Leaders Convention 2008 - Melbourne, VIC

Monday 17th - Wednesday 19th November 2008

The Melbourne Town Hall

Recipe's of the Month - Chili Taco Salad AND Chocolate Chip Cookies

(I'll guarantee there will be no hydrogenated vegetable oils or trans fats in these recipes, but make sure when you buy the choc chips that they do not have vegetable oil in them. You may have to go to a health food store to find good ones)

Chili Taco Salad Serves 4

1/2 head lettuce - shredded

250gms cheese - grated

2 tomatoes - chopped

2 avocados - mashed add a little lemon juice and retain one avocado stone so the avocado does not go brown

2 carrots - grated

1 red onion - sliced thinly

sour cream

chilli sauce

1 TBS butter

2 cloves garlic - chopped

1 red chili - deseeded and chopped

1 large onion - chopped finely

2.5 cm ginger - grated

500 gms beef mince

1 zucchini - grated finely

100 gms tomato paste

400 gms organic tinned tomatoes

1. Prepare the salad ingredients place them in separate bowls or containers
2. Heat the butter, add garlic, chili, onion and ginger, fry gently until onions are translucent
3. Add the meat and cook and stir until meat is brown

4. Add zucchini, tomato paste and tinned tomatoes, heat through and simmer for 15 minutes

5. Making up individual salads

Spread some lettuce on a plate, sprinkle with the carrots, tomatoes and onion

Place the cooked meat mixture on top, sprinkle with cheese, dollop the avocado and sour cream on top and pour over the chili sauce

Serve immediately

This is a meal where I place all the ingredients on the table and everyone in my family has there only style of making up the salad. Enjoy

Chocolate Chip Cookies

You're probably wondering when you look down the ingredient list that I may have made a mistake and added chick peas, but I haven't. By adding the chick peas and the walnuts you use less butter and it makes for a yummy protein cookie. The kids won't know. The only thing you can't do is freeze these cookies, I've tried and they went soggy.

1 cup rapadura sugar

1/2 cup butter

1 large organic free range egg

2 tsp vanilla essence

1 tin of organic chick peas drained and rinsed and smashed

2 cups of organic chocolate chips

3/4 cup walnuts - crushed

2 cups organic plain flour

1/2 cup rolled oats

1 tsp baking powder

1/4 tsp sea salt

Preheat oven 180C

In a large bowl beat sugar and butter until smooth

Add vanilla essence and egg and beat until mixed well

Add chick peas, chocolate chips, walnuts, flour, oats, baking powder and sea salt. Mix until all is combined

Drop the dough by the teaspoon onto the greased baking tray, spacing the cookies (they don't spread). Press with a fork to slightly flatten

Bake cookies for 8 to 10 minutes or until golden brown.

Allow to cool and hide from the family as they will be eaten in one sitting if you leave them on the bench.

Stay Safe, Stay Well and Happy Changing Habits

Cyndi O'Meara

P.S I endorse the following information provided by Tracy Woolley

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P.O. Box 104 Mooloolaba 4557 QLD Australia

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