

# Leyla Weighs In: Here we go again: American Heart Association with the same old message



In light of the recent headlines regarding coconut oil and dangers of saturated fats, I want to take this opportunity to discern and reiterate fact from fallacy when it comes to informing the public about health.

As Dr. Hoffman stated so eloquently in his recent article, I too am most troubled by AHA's insistence that polyunsaturated vegetable oils like "soybean oil, peanut oil, corn oil" continue to be touted as healthy, despite the fact that they're higher in pro-inflammatory omega-6 fats. As we know, the precursor to most of our chronic diseases is inflammation and the standard American diet is already way too heavy in omega-6 sources of fat.



While most of the research the AHA points to are increases in LDL cholesterol with increased saturated fat intake, what interpreters of the literature fail to recognize is most *all* of these increases in are seen in the presence of a high carbohydrate diet.

What the AHA conveniently omitted from their scouring of the scientific literature is the reams of evidence that saturated fats do not increase risk factors for heart disease in the presence of a low carbohydrate diet. In fact, while LDL levels remained high or even increased in these low carb studies, the pattern of LDL changed to larger, fluffier, less atherogenic particles (Pattern A) from the smaller, denser, less desirable Pattern B particles. Moreover, HDL cholesterol also increased, changing cholesterol profiles to a more favorable ratio.

Another fact the AHA doesn't discuss is an independent risk factor for heart disease—high triglycerides. Triglyceride levels fall way down in the setting of a low carb diet—even *before any weight loss has occurred!*

In the next couple of newsletters, I will reprise some of these points so you will have a clearer understanding of the real risk factors for heart disease—inflammation, and their players, and that cholesterol in and of itself is not the bad guy.

To your health!

Leyla Muedin, MS, RD, CDN

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