

ATTACHMENT D:
***TRANS* FAT INFORMATION SHEET**

***Trans* Fat Facts**

Fat is a major source of energy (calories) for the body and aids in the absorption of certain vitamins (Vitamins A, D, E, and K) as well as other important nutrients. The other sources of energy are protein and carbohydrates. Fat contributes nearly twice as many calories per gram as protein or carbohydrates. The main types of fat found in unprocessed foods are saturated, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. *Trans* fat is a kind of fat formed when liquid oils are processed (hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated). This processing makes *trans* fat more like saturated fat. For example, it helps extend shelf life and helps the food to maintain its flavor. *Trans* fat also behaves in the body like saturated fat by raising “bad cholesterol” levels (also called LDL, or low-density lipoprotein). Like saturated fat, *trans* fat increases your risk of coronary heart disease.

Small amounts of *trans* fat occur naturally in dairy and animal products, but most of the *trans* fat in the American diet is found in processed foods, for example foods made with partially hydrogenated vegetable oils such as vegetable shortenings, some margarines, fried foods, baked goods, crackers, cookies, and candies. Since January 2006, food labels have been required to show the amount of *trans* fat in the Nutrition Facts panel, along with saturated fat and total fat.

Americans eat about 4 to 5 times as much saturated fat as *trans* fat in their diets. Most health professionals recommend that you should reduce your consumption of saturated fat, *trans* fat and cholesterol to reduce your risk of heart disease.