

Making Olive Your Food Count.



The sheer volume of nutrition information that reaches today's consumer can be overwhelming, and it can be quite confusing to navigate through the data and effectively apply it to a personal diet. Let's take calories and fat for example. There's more to it than simply keeping track. To effectively develop a healthy regimen, it is essential that we understand the effects of calories and fats and how to successfully incorporate them into our diet. To help make sense of it all, the California Olive Industry has developed a primer on fat and calories.

Instead Of Counting Calories, Let's Make Calories Count.

News Flash: Not all calories are created equal! The food we eat provides us with calories in the form of carbohydrates, proteins and fats. While it is health-helpful for us to eat a healthy mix of these types of calories, it is important that we understand what selections will maximize our nutrient intake.

To get the most out of our food, we need to eat foods that are nutrient dense. Nutrient dense foods contain *quality calories*, which provide the nutrients our bodies need, versus *empty calories*, which provide little or no nutrients. Foods that are more wholesome and natural, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans and legumes, as well as lean meats, will provide the most nutrients in relation to their total amount of calories.

How Many Calories Can You Fit Into One Olive? Not As Many As You Think!

We'd like to let you in on a secret. Olives are a great choice for a low-calorie snack or recipe ingredient. They add flavor and variety with only seven calories per extra large olive (21 calories per serving). Recent research reveals that many consumers think black ripe olives have more than twice the number of calories than they actually have. They're wrong.

California Ripe Olive Sizes and Calories	
Sizes	Average Calories Per Ripe Olive
1 Small	4
1 Medium	5
1 Large	6
1 Extra Large	7
1 Jumbo	7
1 Colossal	9
1 Super Colossal	12

Here's a simple formula you can use to estimate your total caloric needs for the day:*

- 1) Change your weight in pounds to kilograms: Divide your weight by 2.2.
- 2) Your basal metabolic rate is approximately one calorie per kilogram per hour. Multiply your weight in kilograms by the 24 hours in a day. This is the number of calories you burn just being alive each day.
- 3) Now factor in activity: Multiply your calories needed per day (from #2 above) by the following factors, depending on your activity level:
 - Light activity: multiply #2 by 1.3
 - Moderate: multiply #2 by 1.4
 - Heavy: multiply #2 by 1.5

If you sit at a desk for your job, and workout 30 minutes per day, this is considered light activity. If your job involves more motion, and you are active in addition to your workout (you take stairs, walk to work, do a lot of housework, etc.), this is considered moderate activity. Construction work, athletic activity, etc. is considered heavy activity. Most Americans are in the "light activity" level.

*This information was gathered by FitnessLink from "Nutrition: Concepts and Controversies" (West Publishing Company, 1991) and reprinted from www.fitnesslink.com.

Getting To Know Fat.

Dietary fat is a must for good health and satisfaction. We need dietary fat in order to supply our bodies with the absorption and utilization of fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K, nutrients and essential fatty acids. But just as important as fat's health contribution, is the role of flavor and satiety that fat brings to the foods we enjoy.

How California Ripe Olives Stack Up to the Snack Competition			
California Ripe Olives	4 Large (15 grams)	25 calories	2.5 gms fat
Cheddar Cheese	1 ounce	115 calories	9 gms fat
Crackers: Party Mix	1/2 cup	300 calories	22 gms fat
Low-Fat Yogurt	6 ounces	200 calories	3 gms fat
Mixed Nuts	1/2 cup	400 calories	35 gms fat
Large Apple	1	120 calories	0 gms fat
Air-Popped Popcorn	2 cups	60 calories	0 gms fat
Tortilla Chips	20 chips	180 calories	10 gms fat

So, how do we make sure we are getting the right fat in our diet? Fats are generally classified as saturated, polyunsaturated and monounsaturated. While some fats – saturated – are linked to elevated levels of LDL (bad) cholesterol in the blood and increased risk of heart disease, polyunsaturates and monounsaturates actually lower “bad” LDL levels. At the same time, only monounsaturated fat preserves HDL (good) cholesterol levels. It’s critical to pay attention to the type of fat in various foods.

Type of Fat	Sources
Saturated	Red meats (beef, pork, lamb), poultry, cheese, eggs, coconut and palm oils
Polyunsaturated	Corn, safflower, sunflower, sesame oils, some nuts and seeds
Monounsaturated	Olives, olive oil, canola oil, nuts and avocados

The Win-Win Combination Of Fat And Olives.

Olives are an excellent source of monounsaturated fat. In addition to the well-recognized benefits that monounsaturated fats have on blood cholesterol levels, researchers are now taking a closer look into the role that monounsaturated fats play in protecting against certain cancers such as breast cancer, diseases such as type II (non-insulin) diabetes and obesity.

You may also be surprised to learn that olives are a fruit. They are cholesterol-free and contain vitamins and minerals including copper, calcium, fiber and vitamin E. Today, all of these nutrients are found to have a beneficial role in health.

The Health Heritage Of The Olive.

The Mediterranean world has viewed the olive as sacred for more than 4,000 years. Ancient Greek myths tell how Athena, goddess of wisdom, bestowed mankind with a gift – the olive tree. From this rugged and beautiful tree come a variety of products such as olive oil, brined olives, soaps, perfumes and ointments.

The rediscovery of Mediterranean foods among the health and culinary worlds has confirmed the ancient wisdom of this culture. In the 1950s, a pioneering study led by Ancel Keys demonstrated that people in Mediterranean areas had a lower incidence of heart disease and enjoyed a longer life. Research has linked these benefits to the presence of monounsaturated fat in the Mediterranean diet.

Scientific literature continues to provide further evidence for

the protective benefits of monounsaturated fats as well as the other nutrients found in olives and traditional foods of the Mediterranean cuisine.

Here are some healthy, great-tasting ideas you can use when preparing foods at home:

- Chilled olives are wonderful as an appetizer for unexpected guests. Just open a chilled can of California Ripe Olives, drain and serve in a pretty dish. For an extra special touch, try chilling the dish, too.
- Skewer whole California Ripe Olives alternately with chunks of mushroom, red bell pepper, zucchini and onion for grilling.
- For an easy, but elegant entrée, spoon a mixture of chopped California Ripe Olives and fresh herbs onto the center of individual boneless, skinless chicken breast halves. Fold meat over filling and bake folded sides down until the meat is white in the thickest part.
- Instead of using high-calorie mayonnaise on your sandwich, try mixing a 4½-ounce can of chopped California Ripe Olives with a little olive oil and lemon juice and you have a delicious condiment.
- Empty a drained can of whole pitted California Ripe Olives into an ovenproof dish. Moisten them with a bit of olive oil and roast in a 350-degree oven for an hour to intensify their flavor.

Summing It Up.

We see that there’s more to a healthy diet than simply keeping track of calories and fat. To get in gear to win the nutrition game, it’s important that we find those foods that provide us with not only the right kind of calories and the right kind of fat, but enjoyment and satisfaction.

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For additional information, recipes and snack ideas, visit the California Olive Industry web site at www.calolive.org or write to:



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