

# BRANCATI CENTER BULLETIN

*Baltimore*

## HOT TOPICS

### Measles

Over the past few months there has been an increase in measles cases in the United States. As of March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the Centers for Disease Control reported 301 confirmed cases in total. There has been 1 confirmed case in Maryland affecting a Howard County resident who traveled internationally. The measles outbreak this year started in Texas and New Mexico and has been associated with individuals, mostly children, who were not vaccinated against the measles.

### What is measles?

Measles is a highly contagious disease caused by a virus. The infection causes symptoms usually 7 to 14 days after contact with the virus. Symptoms may include a high fever, cough, runny nose and red, watery eyes. Over the course of the next several days, tiny white spots can appear inside the mouth followed by a rash spreading from the face down the body.

## DEAR NEIGHBORS,

As we spring into March, we will continue with our nutrition series, focusing on fat basics this month. We will also discuss obesity and how to know if you are at a healthy body weight in recognition of World Obesity Day. Our Hot Topics section will dive into the current measles outbreak and what we can do to prevent the spread of this serious infection. We hope folks were able to participate in the B'More Healthy Expo earlier this month and please stay tuned for more health fair events coming your way.

-The Brancati Center Team

## NUTRITION BASICS: DIETARY FATS

### What are they and why are they important?

Fats are an important source of long-lasting energy and also help with the absorption of essential vitamins.

### Where are they found?

Fats are found in oils, nuts, seeds, avocados, fish, dairy, meat, and many baked goods.

### Where can I find fats on food labels?

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size 1 1/2 cup (208g)	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	240
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 4g	8%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 430mg	19%
Total Carbohydrate 46g	17%
Dietary Fiber 7g	25%
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 2g Added Sugars	4%
Protein 11g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 6mg	35%
Potassium 240mg	6%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Try to eat less saturated fat, aiming for foods that are <5% Daily Value in saturated fat

Limit trans fats as much as possible, as they increase risk of heart disease



### Which fats should I eat?

The three main types of dietary fats are unsaturated fats, saturated fats, and trans fats.

Unsaturated fats, which are liquid at room temperature, are heart healthy. They control cholesterol, decrease risk of heart disease, and lower blood pressure.

Examples: Olive oil, avocado, nuts, seeds, fish oil

Saturated fats, which are solid at room temperature and are often found in animal products, increase cholesterol buildup that leads to heart disease.

Examples: Butter, cheese, beef, lamb, pork, coconut oil

Trans fats, found in fast food and baked goods, also increase cholesterol build-up and increase the risk for heart disease. Trans fats should be fully removed from the diet.

Examples: Shortening, commercial baked goods, microwave popcorn, fried foods

### Beneficial fats to include in your diet:

- Olive, canola, peanut, and sesame oil
- Avocado
- Olives
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Fatty fish and fish oil
  - \*Salmon
  - \*Tuna
  - \*Mackerel
  - \*Trout
  - \*Sardines

### For more information click on the links below

[Johns Hopkins \(types of fat\)](#)

[Johns Hopkins \(myths about fat\)](#)

[Nutrition.gov \(low-fat alternatives\)](#)



## Spotlight: World Obesity Day

March 4<sup>th</sup> of each year is a day we recognize and raise awareness of obesity. Given the health impacts that obesity can have on a person's life, we wanted to cover this important topic.

### What is Obesity?

Obesity is the condition of having excess body fat, which may lead to health issues like diabetes and heart disease, especially for those carrying more weight in the midsection. However, not everyone with obesity experiences health problems. Genetics play a major role in body shape and size, but factors like diet, activity levels, and stress also influence weight changes over time.

There are reference ranges for obesity based on body mass index (BMI), which is calculated using a person's height and weight. It is important to understand that BMI is just one way of knowing your risk for health complications, but BMI alone does not tell you how healthy you are. In addition to BMI, it is good to learn about your individual health status, through regular screening for diseases such as diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure. Your ability to carry out activities of daily living, exercise tolerance, and lean body mass (muscle and bone density) are also important measures of health.

### What is a healthy weight?

A healthy weight is the weight at which you do not have health conditions associated with weight gain (such as diabetes and hypertension). It is also a weight at which you can move your body comfortably and do not feel restricted with activities of daily living.

If you are concerned about your weight, we recommend you meet with your primary doctor to better understand your specific health status. This will help you to set realistic goals around weight that will improve your health rather than focusing on a specific weight or BMI number alone.