**Small cut in saturated fat 'lowers heart disease risk': Reducing intake by just 1% can decrease the chance by 8%**

* **Foods such as steak, chocolate, hard cheese should be avoided**
* **Harvard University found a 5% higher intake of fats in these foods was associated with a 25% increased risk of coronary heart disease**
* **These fats should be replaced in diets by other food like carbohydrates**

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Replacing just one per cent of your saturated fat intake with healthy food can reduce the risk of heart disease by up to eight per cent, scientists claim.

Foods such as steak, chocolate, hard cheese, whole milk and butter are high in saturated fats which is bad for our hearts.

Harvard University scientists found around a five per cent higher intake of fats found in these foods was associated with a 25 per cent increased risk of coronary heart disease over the next 24 to 28 years.

But replacing just one per cent of these saturated fat from our diet with more healthy sources of energy drastically reduced the risk by between six and eight per cent.

Saturated fats should be replaced with polyunsaturated fats, monounsaturated fats, whole grain carbohydrates, or plant proteins.

Assistant professor Qi Sun said: ‘Dietary recommendations should remain on replacing total saturated fat with unsaturated fats or whole grain carbohydrate, as an effective approach towards preventing coronary heart disease.’

The study, published in The BMJ, involved studies of 73,147 US women between 1984 and 2012, and 42,635 men between 1986 and 2010.

All were free of major long-term illnesses at the start and were asked about their diets every four years as well as incidences of coronary heart disease.

The most commonly consumed major saturated fatty acids were lauric acid, myristic acid, palmitic acid and stearic acid, and accounted for around nine to 10 per cent of total energy in the participants.

Each of these saturated fatty acids was associated with an increased risk of coronary heart disease.

Researchers then estimated the reduction in risk that would be associated with replacement of saturated fatty acids with more healthy nutrients.

Prof Sun said: ‘Higher dietary intakes of major saturated fatty acids are associated with an increased risk of coronary heart disease.

‘Dietary recommendations for the prevention of coronary heart disease should continue to focus on replacing total saturated fat with more healthy sources of energy.’

Read more: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3966694/Small-cut-saturated-fat-lowers-heart-disease-risk-Reducing-intake-just-1-decrease-chance-8.html#ixzz4WDhkou9X>   
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