

## No Packet Required: Bake At Home and Avoid Trans Fat

Take a stroll through the aisles of your local supermarket and you'll be confronted with a vast array of processed cakes, biscuits, muffins, chips, pastries and crackers packaged in bright, colourful packets and boxes, just begging for you to pick them up and put them in your trolley.

But have you ever stopped to read the labels? They may be quick and easy, but most of these products are high in all the nasty fats nutritionists tell us to avoid.

Trans fat in particular has emerged as one of the worst of the bad guys in the health war. This type of fat – created by an industrial process called hydrogenation - is worse for your heart than saturated fat. It is found in some deep-fried foods and processed foods made with margarine or shortening, such as cakes and pastries, and is used by food manufacturers to achieve a certain consistency in these foods as well as to increase shelf life.

What makes trans fat so unhealthy is that eating it increases the level of “bad” LDL cholesterol in the body and at the same time, lowers the concentration of “good” HDL cholesterol that protects against heart disease.

To avoid trans fat, the health experts tell us to steer clear of deep-fried fast foods and takeaways, as well as manufactured biscuits, cakes and pies. So how can you have your cake and eat it, too? The answer is to take a leaf out of your grandmother's book and bake it yourself.

Before you start making excuses about your busy lifestyle, chew on this fact: cooking authentic food from scratch does not have to be time-consuming or difficult. Take muffins, for example. Simply mix a few ingredients together, pour the batter into a muffin mould, pop it in the oven, and 20 minutes later you'll have yourself a batch of scrumptious, trans fat-free muffins. If you need a bit of inspiration, there are loads of healthy, quick and easy [recipes](#) available for free on the internet. You just need to know where to look (try [www.chefstoolbox.com.au](http://www.chefstoolbox.com.au)).

The rewards will far outweigh the small amount of effort required to cook at home. Your kitchen will be filled with the delicious aroma of freshly-baked goods. You'll feel the gratification of being able to enjoy food you have prepared yourself, and you can be satisfied in knowing exactly what is in the food you are feeding your family.

But the greatest reward of all is that not only will your home-cooked treats be easier on your heart, they will taste a whole lot better than anything that comes out of a packet or box.

### About the Author

The Chefs Toolbox specialise in quality cookware and [kitchen utensils](#). For more information about The Chefs Toolbox and some fantastic [recipes](#), visit [www.chefstoolbox.com.au](http://www.chefstoolbox.com.au)

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