



THE HEALTHIEST SPREADS

Should you use butter, margarine, or something else on your bread?

Butter is natural, it's said to taste better, and it contains only two or three ingredients—but it has more than 50 percent saturated fat! Margarine is considered artificial and blends together more than five ingredients (including additives). While it supplies 65 percent less saturated fat than butter and no cholesterol, margarine can hide nasty trans fats. And even the nonhydrogenated variety (trans fat free) can supply a significant amount of saturated fat to your diet when used regularly. Over a year's time, spreading just a few slices of bread each day with margarine will add more than two pounds of saturated fat to your diet!

In the Mediterranean, bread is not usually covered with a yellow fat spread. They eat it plain! While costly plant-sterol enriched margarines may serve a purpose, for those with high cholesterol, neither butter nor margarine is an optimal spread. Spreads made from whole foods are better for you and better for the planet.

spreads to love

The following alternatives to margarine and butter are delicious and simple to obtain or create.

Avocado. Cut open a ripe avocado and enjoy it on your bread. If you keep the seed in, the leftover part will last longer in the fridge.

Hummus. Use this Middle Eastern “butter” as a dip or spread. Made from chickpeas (garbanzos), tahini (see below), garlic, and lemon juice, it packs a punch with antioxidants and other phytonutrients.

Baba ghanoush is a lovely, smoky eggplant puree that works well as a savory sandwich filling. It also lowers your cholesterol!

Tzatziki. Made with yogurt, garlic, and cucumber, you'll like this Greek winner on bread or vegetables.

Tahini is a sesame seed paste (similar to peanut butter) that's delicious on bread with a drizzle of honey and sliced banana.

Nut butters. Peanut butter was made to replace dairy butter, and it's a good way to lower your cholesterol and protect yourself from a heart attack.

Extra virgin olive oil. When refrigerated in a small dish, it becomes semi-solid and makes a good spread. Or dip some bread into it when it's room temperature.

Nutritionist Sue Radd is the award-winning author of *The Breakfast Book* and coauthor of *Eat To Live*, internationally acclaimed for showing how savvy eating can combat cancer and heart disease and improve well-being. See www.sueradd.com for more nutrition information.