

Humans have eaten butter for literally thousands of years. Butter was originally made from fresh hand-milked cows grazing on natural clean, bright pastures and usually allowed to sour a bit which increased enzyme values. Butter, and cheese, were ways of preserving some of the goodness of the fresh, raw milk as a part of a wholesome diet. Then, during WWII, the face of agriculture changed and somehow we were talked into thinking that some chemicalized goop was better than butter. That goop, to which individuals had to add their own yellow dye which came with it, was called margarine. Then, instead of it maintaining as a sorry substitute during lean years, through clever marketing it became highly desirable.

Today we are finding out that truly, butter is better. Some of the negatives which have been discovered about margarine are:

- Very high in trans fatty acids
- Triple risk of coronary heart disease
- Increases total cholesterol and LDL ('bad' cholesterol)
- Lowers HDL cholesterol, ('good' cholesterol)
- Increases the risk of cancers up to five fold
- Lowers quality of breast milk
- Decreases immune response
- Decreases insulin response

In fact, according to a recent Harvard Medical Study, eating margarine increased heart disease in women by 53% over eating the same amount of butter. Butter is a natural fat thus it increases the absorption of many other nutrients in other foods.

Essentially, margarine is just one molecule away from plastic. If you are not yet convinced that it would be wise to avoid margarine, try this experiment. Take your tub of margarine and leave it in your garage or a shady area. Within a couple of days you will note there are no flies or flying pests that will go near it. Nor does it rot or smell different. This tells you that it is absolutely *not* a living substance. You might as well just melt down your Tupperware to put onto your fresh vegetables!

So should you simply go ahead and indulge in loads of butter? That certainly would *not* be our recommendation with modern butter although a little for it's unsurpassed flavor may be delightful.

Unfortunately, modern butter is almost as unattractive as margarine! Most modern dairy cows are fed high levels of antibiotics and various hormones to keep them producing abnormally high levels of milk which is wrest from them by machines. Such contaminants come right through the milk and into whomever drinks it. Additionally, even organically

grown herds rarely see green grass but are fed literally tons of unnatural grain concentrates. Such grain feeding changes the natural fatty acids of milk (including, of course, the butter fat) to the less desirable Omega 6 rather than the normal, and very desirable, Omega 3. The butter is pasteurized 'for our safety.' Unfortunately, such processing sterilizes the milk to such a degree that even calves fed their own mother's milk will die. Living creatures cannot live on sterilized, enzyme-less 'foods.'

An ancient form of keeping raw butter from range-free cows without refrigeration, is to make *ghee*. Melt 1# unsalted organic butter in saucepan and simmer at low heat for about 12 minutes. Remove from burner and cool for about 15 minutes before pouring through a sterilized strainer into a sterilized lidded jar. *Ghee* not only will cook at higher temperatures, it is more healthful since the long-chain fat molecules are broken down and the milk solids have been caught by the strainer.

Unless you can locate fresh raw butter from range-free dairy herds [WWW.REALMILK.COM or WWW.ORGANICPASTURES.COM], even butter should be consumed in reasonable quantities. A healthful and readily available alternative consideration in this modern day would be coconut oil. One brand we know of that is absolutely pure and which is naturally, rather than chemically, derived, is Tropical Traditions from the Philippines [WWW.TROPICALTRADITIONS.COM/866-311-2626]. The health benefits of coconut oil are prodigious, rivaling, if not exceeding, old-fashioned real butter including anti-viral protection and weight control. It is also wonderful for cooking as heat will not compromise its value and its taste is quite neutral.

Naturally, all this discussion also holds true for milk. Our HUMAN BASICS: FATS article discusses why low fat varieties are not advised regardless of the milk's organic or range-free source (see above). Cow's milk can supply excellent nutrition for many individuals, especially northern Europeans or other ethnicities who traditionally used milk, and especially if fermented into kefir, It certainly can be very healing, especially the colostrum, for babies or young children. If a recipe calls for milk, cream is actually more easily digested by most (after all, it has not been homogenized), or use canned coconut milk instead.

Regardless of your dairy decisions, we *do* suggest avoiding that toxic plastic called margarine! ■