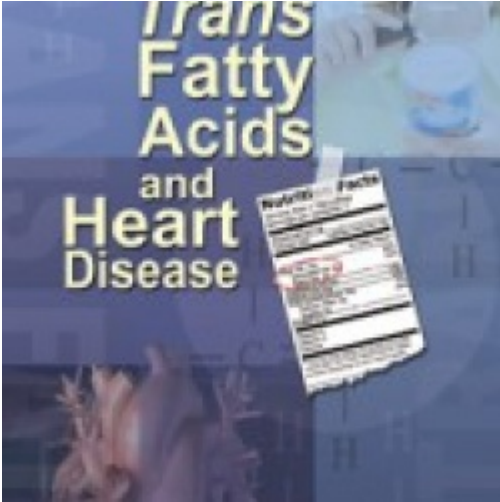


# Trans Fatty Acids and Heart Disease

By ACSH Staff — October 30, 2006



The recent addition of *trans* fat information to the Nutrition Facts labels on food products, combined with news media reports and activists warnings, have brought these fats to the forefront of public concern.

In a national survey conducted in November 2005, 81 percent of a representative sample of U.S. consumers reported being aware of *trans* fats, and 54 percent indicated that they were trying to decrease their *trans* fat consumption (IFIC Foundation, 2006).

Putting the role of *trans* fatty acids (TFAs) into perspective can be difficult, both because of the intensity of the rhetoric surrounding them and because of widely varying claims about the extent of the health risk they pose.

Should American consumers believe the Food and Drug Administration's claim that between 600 and 1,200 heart attacks per year will be averted by *trans* fat labeling on food products? Or should they believe the predictions by some scientists that removal of TFAs from the food supply could prevent more than 200,000 heart attacks per year?

Is some number between these two extremes more realistic? Or are the data insufficient to justify confidence in any numerical estimates at all?

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