

Fat Replacers: Salatrim

Functional ingredients are used in manufactured foods to provide other benefits in addition to nutrition or product quality.

Brand name:

Benefat™ is the trade name for salatrim.

FDA approved use:

In chocolate chips and other confections. Not restricted as is generally recognized as safe, or “GRAS.” Designed for low-moisture foods such as candies.

Calories:

Five calories per gram, about half that of other natural fats. Partially absorbed in the digestive tract.

Content:

Made of at least one common short-chain fatty acid and one long-chain fatty acid attached to the normal backbone of a fat (a triglyceride).

Possible benefits:

Potential to reduce calorie and fat intake.

Side effects:

None. Does not affect blood cholesterol levels or absorption of fat-soluble vitamins or other nutrients.

Rules for use in foods:

The food manufacturer must list “salatrim” in the ingredient list on the package and may choose to add “a fat that contributes five (5) calories-per-gram and is partially available.” It is classified as a saturated fat and the amount present in the food would be indicated in the total fat section of the Nutrition Facts panel.

Points to consider:

- Salatrim is made of natural fats that are normally handled by the body.
- The effect of eating chocolate chips containing salatrim on calorie and fat intake depends on what else you eat and on how active you are.
- Because its use is not restricted, it may eventually appear in a variety of products.
- Salatrim chips are sweeter than regular chocolate chips. Try them in a recipe to see if they give you the taste you expect.
- Check the package to see if chips containing salatrim will perform like regular chips in homemade fudge or icings.
- Products containing salatrim are more expensive than the regular items they can replace. Look at the price difference.

