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## **Healthy Eating Is on the Menu at Trinitas Hospital**

***With “No-Added Trans Fat” Selections, New Dietary Selections are  
among the first in New Jersey for Patients and Employees***

Elizabeth, New Jersey In an effort to play an active part in assuring that patient meals are prepared without Trans Fat oil, Trinitas Hospital recently introduced a new “No-Added Trans Fat” Patient Menu. A similar menu for employees and visitors will be fully implemented after renovations to the hospital’s Cafeteria are completed this Fall.

Trinitas has moved forward on providing this menu because of significant health concerns relating to diet in the US. “We take pride in our initiative to adopt this ‘No-Added Trans Fat’ menu. We’re a year ahead of Trans Fat guidelines that will go into effect in New York City in July 2008,” asserts Michael McIntyre, Director, Support Services.

### ***Weighty Issues Across the Population***

The Centers for Disease Control notes that being overweight continues to be a serious health concern for adolescents and children, too. In the 1970’s, only 15 % of adults ages 20 - 74 were considered overweight. Today, nearly 33% are. In two National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES), one in 1976 - 1980 and another in 2003 - 2004, young people ages 12 - 19 experienced an increase in being overweight from 5% to just over 17%. Weight is an issue for children ages 6 - 11 since nearly 19% of them are overweight, up from 6.5% 30 years ago. Even pre-schoolers are included in this alarming trend as children ages 2 - 5 who are overweight increased from 5% to nearly 14%.

Accompanying these weight gain increases are a number of other health issues and concerns. Those who are overweight or obese run the risk of other health conditions and problems such as high blood pressure, high total cholesterol, high levels of triglycerides, Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, gallbladder disease, sleep apnea, and respiratory problems.

### ***Naturally Occurring Fat Vs. Added Fat***

The fat content of food along with portion size plays a role in this unhealthy trend. For example, saturated fats found in animal fats and trans fat, which occurs when vegetable oil is hydrogenated to harden it, can contribute to higher levels of cholesterol.

Trans Fatty acids are not essential and provide no known benefit to human health while other types of fats, such as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, are beneficial and can help to lower blood cholesterol levels. “Although there are Trans Fats naturally present in dairy products and animal products, there are no added Trans Fats on the patient menu,” explains Sun Ja Park, MSRD, Director of Food and Nutrition Services at Trinitas. “The hospital uses oils, shortening and margarine containing artificial trans fat used for frying or for spreads with less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving. Trinitas is heading toward a truly heart health-conscious menu for patients, visitors and its employees.”

The Hospital currently serves a 95% No-Added Trans Fat menu in the employee Cafeteria at its Williamson Street Campus. When all of the hospital’s dessert and breakfast menu items are No-Added Trans Fat items, the menu will be 100% No-Added Trans Fat. Similar No-Added Trans Fat menu items will follow at the hospital’s New Point Campus in November.

Sun Ja Park further explains that the hospital’s fried items such as breaded chicken tenders, chicken wings, onion rings, and French Fries have been cooked in Trans Fat Free oil since the Spring. Trans Fat Free oils are used in the preparation of other foods such as cooked fajita chicken and sauteed vegetables. Pre-packaged cookies, snacks and chips currently offered in the cafeteria feature Trans Fat Free oils.

“Trinitas Hospital is committed to providing appropriate dietary offerings to improve the heart health of those we care for, their families, and our employees as well,” asserts Michael McIntyre.

### **About Trinitas Hospital**

Trinitas Hospital is a major center for comprehensive health services for those who live and work in Central New Jersey. Offering 531 beds, Trinitas is distinguished by no less than ten Centers of Excellence, which include: the Trinitas Comprehensive Cancer Center; the Center for Wound Healing & Hyperbaric Medicine; the Sleep Disorders Center, cardiology services, maternal/child health services, diabetes management,

women's services, renal care, behavioral health services and senior services. The Department of Behavioral Health & Psychiatry offers one of the most comprehensive services in the state for the psychiatric treatment of children and adults. Trinitas serves as the Center for End-Stage Renal care for Eastern Union County. Trinitas is a Catholic teaching hospital sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth in partnership with Elizabethtown Healthcare Foundation. For more information on Trinitas Hospital visit: [www.TrinitasHospital.org](http://www.TrinitasHospital.org) or call (908) 994-5138.