



Coconut Oil Benefits: When Fat Is Good For You

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You've no doubt noticed that for about the last 60 years, the majority of health care officials and the media have been telling you saturated fats are bad for your health and lead to a host of negative consequences, including high cholesterol, obesity, heart disease and Alzheimer's disease.

Meanwhile during this same 60 years, the American levels of heart disease, obesity, elevated serum cholesterol and Alzheimer's have skyrocketed.

Did you know that multiple studies on Pacific Island populations who get 30-60 percent of their total caloric intake from fully saturated coconut oil have all shown nearly non-existent rates of cardiovascular disease? (1)

The fact is, all saturated fats are not created equal.

The operative word here is "created," because some saturated fats occur naturally, while other fats are artificially manipulated into a saturated state through the man-made process called hydrogenation.

Hydrogenation manipulates vegetable and seed oils by adding hydrogen atoms while heating the oil, producing a rancid, thickened substance that really only benefits processed food shelf life and [corporate profits](#) -- just about all experts now agree, hydrogenation does *nothing* good for your health.

These manipulated saturated fats are also called [trans-fats](#) -- and you should avoid them like the plague. But if one form of saturated fat is bad for you, does that mean *all* saturated fat is bad for you?

Absolutely not!

The Tropics' Best Kept Secret

The truth about coconut oil is obvious to anyone who has studied the health of those who live in native tropical cultures, where coconut has been a primary dietary staple for thousands of years.

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15(1), Rottikaranur Road, Thirumalayampalayam Panchayat, Coimbatore 641 105

www.vaidyagrama.com

healing@punarnava.org

Phone : INDIA 1 800 2000 086



Back in the 1930s, Dr. Weston Price found South Pacific Islanders whose diets were high in coconut to be healthy and trim, despite high dietary fat, and heart disease was virtually non-existent. Similarly, in 1981, researchers studying two Polynesian communities for whom coconut was the primary caloric energy source found them to have excellent cardiovascular health and fitness. (2)

Where were all the clogged arteries and heart attacks from eating all of this "evil" saturated fat?

Obviously, coconut oil was doing nothing to harm the health of these islanders.

It may be surprising for you to learn that the naturally occurring saturated fat in coconut oil is actually good for you and provides a number of profound health benefits, such as:

- Improving your [heart health](#).(3)
- Boosting your thyroid. (4)
- Increasing your metabolism.
- Promoting a [lean body](#) and weight loss if needed.
- Supporting your immune system. (5)

Coconut oil even benefits [your skin](#) when applied topically and has been found to have anti-aging, regenerative effects.

So, what are coconut oil's secrets to success?

How Coconut Oil Works Wonders in Your Body

Nearly 50 percent of the fat in coconut oil is of a type rarely found in nature called lauric acid, a "miracle" compound because of its unique health promoting properties. Your body converts lauric acid into monolaurin, which has anti-viral, anti-bacterial and anti-protozoa properties. (6)

Coconut oil is also nature's richest source of medium-chain fatty acids (MCFAs), also called medium-chain triglycerides or MCTs. By contrast, most common vegetable or seed oils are comprised of long chain fatty acids (LCFAs), also known as long-chain triglycerides or LCTs.

LCTs are large molecules, so they are difficult for your body to break down and are predominantly stored as fat.

But MCTs (7) , being smaller, are easily digested and immediately burned by your liver for energy -- like carbohydrates, but without the [insulin](#) spike. MCTs actually

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boost your metabolism and help your body use fat for energy, as opposed to storing it, so it can actually help you become leaner.

Back in the 1940s, farmers discovered this effect accidentally when they tried using inexpensive coconut oil to fatten their livestock.

It didn't work!

Instead, coconut oil made the animals lean, active and hungry.

Coconut oil has actually been shown to help optimize body weight, which can dramatically reduce your risk of developing [Type 2 diabetes](#) (8). Besides weight loss, boosting your metabolic rate will improve your energy, accelerate healing and improve your overall immune function.

And several studies have now shown that MCTs can enhance physical or athletic performance.(9)

And finally, as we have already discussed, coconut oil is incredibly good for your heart. The truth is this: [it is unsaturated fats that are primarily involved in heart disease](#) and [too much sugar](#) and processed foods, not the naturally occurring saturated fats, as you have been led to believe. (10)

Coconut Oil in Your Kitchen

Personally, I use only two oils in my food preparation.

The first, extra-virgin olive oil is the best monounsaturated fat and works great as a salad dressing. However, [olive oil](#) should not be used for cooking. Due to its chemical structure, heat makes olive oil susceptible to oxidative damage. So for cooking, I use coconut oil exclusively.

And polyunsaturated fats, which include common vegetable oils such as corn, soy, safflower, sunflower and canola, are absolutely [the worst oils to cook with](#).

Why?

Three primary reasons:

1) Cooking your food in omega-6 vegetable oils produces a variety of very toxic chemicals, as well as forming trans-fats. Frying destroys the antioxidants in oil, actually oxidizing the oil, which causes even worse problems for your body than trans-fats.

2) Most vegetable oils are [GM \(genetically modified\)](#), including more than 90 percent of soy, corn and canola oils.

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3) Vegetable oils contribute to the overabundance of damaged omega-6 fats in your diet, throwing off your [omega-6 to omega-3 ratio](#). Nearly everyone in Western society consumes far too many omega-6 fats -- about 100 times more than a century ago -- and insufficient omega 3 fats, which contributes to numerous chronic degenerative diseases. There is only one oil that is stable enough to withstand the heat of cooking, and that's coconut oil. So, do yourself a favor and ditch all those "healthy oil wannabes," and replace them with a large jar of fresh, organic, heart-supporting coconut oil.

Dr. Joseph Mercola is the founder and director of [Mercola.com](#). [Become a fan of Dr. Mercola on Facebook](#), follow him on [Twitter](#), and check out [Dr. Mercola's report on sun exposure!](#)

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Coconut Oil vs. Olive oil

There are so many myths and different opinions out there that are hyped up by the media and cause so much confusion over which Oils should be used and which are 'healthy' for us.

We have put together some researched facts, some myth busters and included some interesting articles on the difference between Olive Oil and Coconut Oil.

OLIVE OIL – It has been widely spoken about that Olive oil is the 'healthiest' oil that we can consume. Following claims that it lowers cholesterol and is healthy for your heart. In many research articles, it was proven that the only contributing factor of lowered cholesterol and healthy impacts on heart health, when people were put on a 'diet' including an increased consumption of Olive Oil, was that they were substituting it for other products high in saturated and Trans fats. There was no solid proof that increasing the amount of Olive Oil, actually lowered cholesterol or had increased health benefits for your heart.

It is recommended that we consume at least 4 tablespoons of Olive Oil per day before any health benefits to our hearts are actually seen. That accounts for 88% of our daily recommended intake of fat and adds up to nearly 600 calories!

Most oils come from natural sources, however depending on which brand of olive oil you buy, depends on the quality of the Olives that are actually used to make the oil. The expensive and rare Olive Oils are mostly made up of high quality Olives, however many of the 'common' cheaper brands use rotten olives and add chemicals and other ingredients to mask the taste and to lessen the cost of production. The

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best form of Olive Oil is Extra Virgin Olive Oil as this means that there are no chemicals or synthetic additives in the Oil.

When oils are heated up, they all have certain smoke points in which the nutritional value of the oil decreases significantly and the Oil oxidises releasing harmful toxins. Macadamia Nut oil and Coconut Oil can be used at a much higher heat than Olive oil without breaking down the good fats and leaving you with a completely nutritional void food product.

COCONUT OIL – Coconut Oil has been branded as one of the worst Oils to consume and the media has warned us against it. Many reports have been made that it causes heart disease and high cholesterol even if only using small quantities.

If this is true then why is there an almost a non-existent rate of cardiovascular disease in the Pacific Islands where 30-60% of their caloric intake is made up of fully saturated Coconut Oil??

Here are some health benefits of using Coconut Oil in your everyday meals.

- Boosts metabolism & aids with weight loss.
- Improves insulin secretion and utilization of blood glucose.
- Improves heart health & reduces health risks associated with diabetes.
- Supports thyroid function.
- Supports immune system.

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- It's antifungal, antiviral & antibacterial.
- Promotes healing & tissue repair.
- Improves digestion & nutrient absorption.
- Enhances physical performance.
- Hydrates and protects the skin, improves skin tone and prevents wrinkles and skin aging.
- Reduces psoriasis, eczema symptoms.
- Improves hair and scalp condition.
- Functions as a protective antioxidant.
- It's a quick energy source and controls sugar cravings.
- Relieves stress on pancreas and enzyme systems of the body.
- Reduces symptoms associated with pancreatitis.
- Helps relieve symptoms associated with chronic fatigue syndrome.
- Relieves symptoms associated with benign prostatic hyperplasia (prostate enlargement).
- Reduces epileptic seizures.
- Helps protect against kidney disease and bladder infections.

How does it work?

Have you ever heard of lauric acid? It's a compound with amazing health promoting properties. It contains antifungal, antibacterial, antiviral properties that boost the immune system. Coconut oil fat is nearly 50% *lauric acid*, which is converted by the body into *monolaurin* and makes coconut oil effective in treating many bacterial and fungal

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infections such as candida, athlete's foot, measles, influenza, and hep C. Another source of monolaurin is human breast milk, go figure!

Another reason coconut oil has so many benefits is because unlike most other fats and oils, it is comprised of medium-chain fatty acids, (MCFA's), which are smaller fat molecules metabolised in the liver and immediately absorbed and converted into energy, kind of like glucose but without the insulin spike. Other fats and oils are made up of long chain fatty acids, or long-chain triglycerides, which are larger molecules that are difficult for your body to break down and are mainly stored as fat. The MCFA's in coconut oil actually boost your metabolism and help your body use fat for energy, which can lead to weight loss, Type 2 diabetes risk reduction, increase in energy, accelerated healing and improved immunity. When it comes to your skin, coconut oil is very hydrating and keeps skin's connective tissues strong, which prevents sagging and wrinkles.