

The Truth About Coconut Oil (<http://www.webmd.com/diet/features/coconut-oil-and-health>)

By Kathleen M. Zelman, MPH, RD, LD, WebMD Expert Column

Coconut oil, according to recent reports, is the latest food cure-all. Claims abound that coconut oil is a health food that can cure everything from poor immune function, thyroid disease, and heart disease, to obesity, cancer, and HIV.

So should you stock up on coconut oil? Not so fast.

The evidence that coconut oil is super-healthy is not convincing and these claims appear to be more testimonials than clinical evidence.

There is very limited evidence on disease outcomes, says Dariush Mozaffarian, MD, DrPH, of Harvard Medical School and Harvard School of Public Health. "All that has been studied well is the impact of coconut oil on cholesterol levels and the findings are intriguing but we still don't know if it is harmful or beneficial," Mozaffarian says.

Neither the American Heart Association (AHA) nor the U.S. government's 2010 Dietary Guidelines suggest that coconut oil is any better or preferable over other saturated fats. Coconut oil, like all saturated fats, should be limited to 7%-10% of calories because it can increase risk for heart disease, according to the AHA and 2010 Dietary Guidelines.

What Is Coconut Oil?

Pure virgin coconut oil, containing no hydrogenation (the process of adding hydrogen to make a liquid fat hard), contains 92% saturated fat -- the highest amount of saturated fat of any fat.

Most saturated fats are solid at room temperature, found in animal products (such as meat, dairy, poultry with skin, and beef fat) and contain cholesterol. Unlike animal fats, tropical oils -- palm, palm kernel, and coconut oils -- are saturated fats that are called oils but depending on room temperature can be solid, semi-solid, or liquid, and do not contain cholesterol.

Like all fats, coconut oil is a blend of fatty acids. Coconut oil contains an unusual blend of short and medium chain fatty acids, primarily lauric (44%) and myristic (16.8%) acids. It is this unusual composition that may offer some health benefits.

Additionally, "because they come from coconuts, they may contain beneficial plant chemicals that have yet to be discovered," says Mozaffarian, researcher and co-director of the cardiovascular epidemiology program at Harvard. As for calories, all fats have the same number of calories per gram. One tablespoon of coconut oils contains 117 calories, 14 grams fat, 12 g saturated fat, and no vitamins or minerals.

A pint of extra virgin coconut oils costs from \$12-\$18.

Is Coconut Oil Better Than Other Fats and Oils?

"Coconut oil is better than butter and trans fats but not as good as liquid vegetable oils," says Penn State University cardiovascular nutrition researcher Penny Kris-Etherton, PhD, RD. Mozaffarian agrees that coconut oil is better than partially hydrogenated trans fats and possibly animal fats.

"But even though coconut oil is cholesterol-free, it is still a saturated fat that needs to be limited in the diet and if you are looking for real health benefits, switch from saturated fats to unsaturated fats by using vegetable oils like soybean, canola, corn, or olive oil," says Kris-Etherton, a member of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines advisory committee and Institute of Medicine's panel on dietary reference intakes for macronutrients (which include fats).

Benefits of Macadamia Nut Oil (<http://www.livestrong.com/article/279264-benefits-of-macadamia-nut-oil/>)

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Macadamia nut trees prefer volcanic soil in a tropical climate; you will find them in Brazil, Hawaii, New Zealand, Australia, Kenya, South Africa and Indonesia. Their taste is unique and quite appealing. The nuts are filled with nutrients, and the oil pressed from them is loaded with antioxidants. The oil finds a place of respect among the epicurean community as being even healthier than olive oil.

#### Heart Healthy

Macadamia nut oil is one of the most heart-friendly oils available. Macadamia nut oil is comprised of 80 to 85 percent monounsaturated oil. The oils in macadamia nut oil include vitamin E, Omega-3, Omega-6, oleic, linolenic, linoleic and palmitoleic acids. The monounsaturated nature of the oil lowers the LDL cholesterol, the bad type of cholesterol, making macadamia nut oil very heart friendly. Macadamia nut oil also maintains the level of HDL cholesterol. The reduction in cholesterol because of the monounsaturated oils reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke.

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The Many Health Benefits of Macadamia Nuts - Not Just Delicious, Macadamia Nuts Are Nutritious

By Ashleigh Frank

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[http://www.lifescrpt.com/food/articles/t/the\\_many\\_health\\_benefits\\_of\\_macadamia\\_nuts.aspx](http://www.lifescrpt.com/food/articles/t/the_many_health_benefits_of_macadamia_nuts.aspx)

Think you'd have to be crazy to incorporate macadamia nuts into a healthy diet? Like eggs, nuts have long gotten a bad rap for due to their high fat content. But, as it turns out, some nuts (like the macadamia) might be more nutritious than once suspected. Studies show that macadamia nuts are actually good for your health. Read on to learn the many benefits of what many people swear is the world's most delicious nut.

Macadamia nuts come from macadamia nut trees that typically grow in tropical climates with volcanic soil such as Australia, Brazil, Indonesia, Kenya, New Zealand and South Africa. Macadamia nut trees were planted extensively in Hawai'i as a harvesting crop in the 1900s. Since then, the Hawaiian macadamia nut has become an internationally acclaimed delicacy.

Macadamia nuts have had a bad reputation for a long time, mostly because they are high in fat. However, between 78 to 86 percent of the fat is monounsaturated (the good for you, heart-healthy kind of fat). Monounsaturated fat helps lower cholesterol and decreases your risk of heart disease and stroke.

In addition, macadamia nuts are one of the only food sources that contain palmitoleic acid (a type of monounsaturated fatty acid that may speed up fat metabolism, thus reducing the body's ability to store fat).

Because of its high content of monounsaturated fat, macadamia nut oil is fast becoming a favorite among top chefs around the world. Not only is it healthier than olive oil and canola oil, but many people also believe that it has a better taste. In addition, macadamia nut oil has a higher smoke point than olive oil, which means that it can be cooked at higher temperatures without breaking down and losing its flavor.