

COCONUT OIL

- THE HEALTHIEST OIL ON EARTH

Persistent propaganda by the American edible oil industry has permeated even the remotest corners of the earth so that everybody believes that coconut oil is bad for health and bad for cholesterol. However, the original research on the effect of coconut oil on cholesterol levels in experimental animals apparently made use of damaged, hydrogenated coconut oil. When badly treated, even the best oils can be damaged to become poisonous to our body.

Coconut oil has a high content of saturated fatty acid, about 90%, which is why it is heat stable. In fact, since coconuts are daily exposed to high temperatures in nature, the oil has to be stable. Otherwise, all the coconut trees would have died in the tropical heat.

The remarkable thing about the saturated fat in coconut oil is the high content of medium chain fatty acid, of which the most abundant is lauric acid, forming about 60%. These medium chain fatty acids have remarkable properties, all of which contribute to our well-being.

This is why coconut oil has been used in some traditional cultures for thousands of years. Incidentally, mother's breast milk also contains a high concentration

of medium chain fatty acids. These are important for the nourishment and development of the baby.

The medium chain fatty acids and triglycerides are handled differently by our digestive tract. They can be absorbed directly into our intestinal blood stream without emulsification and other digestive processes. After absorption, they are delivered to the liver. These oils can get into the mitochondria and be utilized for energy much more easily than the longer chain fatty acids. Thus, it is a good source of energy for the body, which explains why medium chain fatty acids are widely used in intravenous nutritional preparations for intensive care unit patients requiring nutritional support.

The medium chain fatty acids especially lauric acid but also caprylic acid, caproic acid and capric acid, have remarkable healing properties. These enhance our immune system. In the laboratory, these fatty acids have been shown to have antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal properties.

These have been shown to be beneficial to our digestive health and may be beneficial in patients with diseases of the digestive system including Crohn's disease and irritable bowel syndrome.

OIL



Coconut oil improves thyroid function more by uncoupling the suppressant effect of polyunsaturated fats rather than the actual stimulation of the thyroid gland.



This may be one reason why coconut oil can be part of program for weight loss. Preliminary studies in patients with HIV and AIDS in the Philippines have shown some encouraging results in reducing the viral load and also improving the nutrition of these patients.



Since coconut oil is so good, every part of the edible coconut is potentially health promoting. Coconut water was good enough to be infused directly into the blood stream as a fluid replacement during the war when the supply of intravenous fluids ran out. Young coconut meat is very refreshing. Coconut milk can be used in coffee, cooking and in baking. It is a great



shame that we are foregoing something so easily available in our doorsteps in favor of man-made margarine and hydrogenated oils, greatly damaging our health in the process. This goes to show how powerful a tool propaganda is and what slick marketing can do.

The above article is an extract from the book "A Recipe for Health" written by Dr Eng Ji Bah and reproduced with the permission of the author. Dr Eng Ji Bah is a practicing thoracic and cardiovascular surgeon at Lam Wah Ee Hospital in Penang, Malaysia. He obtained his medical degree from the University of Cambridge, England and did postgraduate training in England and the United States. His concern about how conventional medicine is practiced led to increasing interest in alternative investigations and thinking. He enjoys counseling patients and friends on healthy eating and lifestyle.

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