

Is coconut oil good for you?

September 29 2014, by Alice H. Lichtenstein

There is no consistent body of data that I am aware of to indicate that coconut oil has documented specific beneficial effects; hence, there is no data that I'm aware of to suggest people should go out of their way to consume coconut oil.

There is some data, however, to suggest it is best to avoid consuming [coconut oil](#) because it is relatively high in saturated [fatty acids](#). Saturated fatty acids raise LDL cholesterol, which is associated with increased risk of cardiovascular disease.

We do know that not all saturated fatty acids have the same effect; and yes, coconut oil may have some saturated fatty acids that are less likely than others to raise LDL cholesterol, the same way that chocolate contains a saturated fatty acid, stearic acid, that is less likely than others to raise LDL cholesterol. However, these foods do come with a mixture of [saturated fatty acids](#). Currently, the evidence for potential beneficial effects of coconut oil is very limited.

We do know that the preponderance of the evidence indicates that consuming unsaturated fat results in better health outcomes than eating saturated fat. So, if you are going to adjust fat in your diet, replace saturated with unsaturated fat. The total fat intake should be moderate, between 25 and 35 percent of your [daily calorie intake](#). Using unsaturated fats such as soybean oil, canola oil and corn oil when preparing foods and making salad dressings is a good idea. Fat is good, fat is important, and unsaturated fat has health benefits.

Provided by Tufts University

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