

MIND YOUR BODY

## With Cashew, Coconut, Copper



by **Rujuta Diwekar**

**C**ASHEWS AND COCONUT—both start with the letter c but really that is no reason why it should give you the cholesterol scare. As for what ‘they’ say about cashews & coconuts, I think they are not exactly good at another c: chemistry.

So isn’t coconut ‘full’ of saturated fat? Yup, it is a rich source of saturated fat but dig a little deeper, actually just scratch and apply some basic chemistry you learnt in school, and you will realise it’s dominantly a ‘medium chain triglyceride’. MCTs, as they are known in the world of endurance sports like the marathon and Tour de France, are a unique type of fat, easy on the stomach and quick to burn for more stamina and better recovery.

In the world of biochemistry, they are recognized as the special fat that helps improve the HDL or the ‘good’ cholesterol. Now you do know this but just to brush up, a high HDL to total cholesterol ratio is known to reduce risk of heart disease. So come on, garnish that sabzi with coconut and eat your idlis with your coconut chutney.

Continuing my love



Illustration by SORIT

affair with cashews, it’s rich in another c, copper. Copper is an antioxidant that works at eliminating the free radicals from your body. Free radicals put you at a risk of developing hypercholesterolemia, heart disease and the like. Copper is also an integral part of an enzyme called ‘lysyl oxidase’ which allows for

cross-linking of collagen and elastin and keeps your bones, joints and most importantly the blood vessels flexible and healthy.

And before you ask me to state my ‘research’, will you please dig up yours which allowed you to link coconut and cashews to cholesterol so ‘c for conclusively?’ ■