

## Study Outlines What Coconut Oil Can Do To Deadly Yeast Infections

February 16, 2016 by [Alexa Erickson](#).

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Coconut oil is one of those super powerful natural resources anyone and everyone can't stop talking about for its multi-faceted abilities to keep us healthy and happy. A high-burning oil commonly used for cooking in replacement of standard butter, olive oil, and other cooking sprays, it has become the go-to in the cooking world for ensuring your food still has great flavour without having to consume an unhealthy and unnecessary amount of fat.

But people don't just pick it up in the Oils & Spices section of the grocery store. They're also using it as skin and hair moisturizer, for toothpaste and mouthwash, as a coffee creamer, for wood polish, as an SPF lip balm, makeup remover, diaper cream, shaving cream, deodorant, and more. The list of practical uses is endless — literally. Scour the internet, and you will find 100-plus uses for the all-natural oil that will have you tossing out your toxic chemical-ridden food, personal hygiene, and various household items for good. And now, this magical oil has one more use to add to the list.

While Western cultures seem to just be catching wind of the coconut palm's various medicinal properties, it's been an honored healing mechanism in indigenous cultures for generations, and an increasing amount of scientific evidence is surfacing which validates the many health benefits it can provide, including protecting the heart, supporting brain health, and reducing stress and depression.

The newest health benefit to take note of comes from a study conducted by researchers at Tufts University, which found that coconut oil is highly effective in its ability to control the overgrowth of the opportunistic fungal pathogen *Candida albicans* in mice. The study, called "Manipulation of Host Diet to Reduce Gastrointestinal Colonization by the Opportunistic Pathogen *Candida Albicans*," which was published in the American Society for Microbiology's journal *mSphere*, recognized *Candida albicans* as being the most prominent human pathogen, resulting in an estimated death rate of 40 percent as a result of systemic infections.

*Candida Albicans* is a form of yeast that can cause some uncomfortable symptoms to its victims, including fatigue, weight gain, joint pain, and gas. This opportunistic fungus is part of the gut flora. When its population gets out of control, the intestinal wall is weakened, making way for the fungus to penetrate the bloodstream, where it then releases toxic byproducts throughout the body. Antibiotics are a common tool for alleviating this issue, but they can do more harm than good, as they also destroy communal bacteria that work to keep *Candida* populations in a healthy range, which in turn can worsen the immunity, causing *C. albicans* overgrowth that can result in candidiasis. This is just one reason to choose a natural approach, like coconut oil, which the researchers of this study hypothesized might work to reduce candida infection in mice.

For the study, microbiologist Carol Kumamoto and nutrition scientist Alice H. Lichtenstein researched how three different dietary fats can affect the amount of *C. albicans* found in the mouse gut. These fats included coconut oil, beef tallow, and soybean oil. Their results proved that coconut oil reigned supreme in reducing *C. albicans* in the gut compared to beef tallow and soybean oil.

Of the results, Kumamoto said "Coconut oil even reduced fungal colonization when mice were switched from beef tallow to coconut oil, or when mice were fed both beef tallow and coconut oil at the same time. These findings suggest that adding coconut oil to a patient's existing diet might control the growth of *C. albicans* in the gut, and possibly decrease the risk of fungal infections caused by *C. albicans*."

This news suggests that, despite Western cultures feeding into the necessity for synthetic drugs as a means to cure ailments, there are, indeed, purely natural resources for curing conditions. And of these preliminary results and how they affect the practice of medicine, Alice H Lichtenstein, D.Sc., says in a statement to *ScienceDaily*: "This study marks a first step in understanding how life-threatening yeast infections in susceptible individuals might be reduced through the short-term and targeted use of a specific type of fat. As exciting as these findings are, we have to keep in mind that the majority of adult Americans are at high risk for heart disease, the number one killer in the U.S. The potential use of coconut oil in the short term to control the rate of fungal overgrowth should not be considered a prophylactic approach to preventing fungal infections."

This information is important in understanding that, as a patient, you have treatment options, and should always continue to educate yourself on ways to heal yourself safely and naturally, which the first author of the study, Kearney Gunsalus, Ph.D., urges too, saying: "We want to give clinicians a treatment option that might limit the need for antifungal drugs. If we can use coconut oil as a safe, dietary alternative, we could decrease the amount of antifungal drugs used, reserving antifungal drugs for critical situations."