

Coconut oil: alzheimer's remedy?



For a few years now, a video on YouTube, has been grabbing the attention of Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers. In it, by Dr. Mary Newport, from Florida, USA, has documented how her husband, Steve Newport – an Alzheimer's patient - has been experiencing remarkable improvement in his condition after coconut oil was introduced to his diet.

Dr. Mary Newport is a physician, and a neo natal specialist. Steve has been suffering from progressive dementia since 2003. By 2008, he was clinically an Alzheimers patient, experiencing memory loss, being in a dazed and confused state for several days in a row, not able to remember how to get a spoon, or take water out of the refrigerator. Dr. Newport writes, "Some days were not so bad; he almost seemed like his former self, happy, with his unique sense of humor. One day I would ask is a certain call came that I was expecting and he would say "No". Two days later, he would remember the message from so-and-so from a couple of days earlier...strange to have no short-term memory and yet the information was filed somewhere in his brain. My gut feeling was that diet has something to do with the fluctuation, but what? If only there was a key to open up the areas of his brain that he didn't have access to."

Steve has been on medication for his dementia since 2005. The family hoped that if they could slow down the brain function deterioration, a treatment would come along that would turn things around. By 2007-08, Steve

was no longer able to cook, remember to eat a meal, or do simple calculations. All this time, Dr. Mary continued to research into the treatments and causes of this disease in an attempt to find something that could help. She found out about how 'medium chain triglycerides' (MCT) or 'ketone bodies/ketoacids' could have the potential to treat or even prevent Alzheimer's disease. Early research showed that ketone bodies may help the brain recover after oxygen loss was experienced (in infants as well as adults), could possibly help the heart recover after a heart attack, and may shrink cancerous tumors. Coconut oil is about 60% medium chain fatty acids.

Meanwhile, Mary was also trying get Steve into several studies, using new treatments to see if they would help Alzheimers patients. For a screening for an entry into the Elan study at the University of South Florida, Steve needed to be tested and screened. During the tests, he could not remember the month or day of the week, or which county he lived in, and had to be reminded of how to write the date. An MMSE test was done and he scored a 14 (in Mini Mental Status Exams, the lower the scores, the worse the dementia. In 2004, Steve was at 23); his clock test (a specific test for Alzheimers) revealed that he was in the 'severe' Alzheimer's category. Unfortunately, this score meant that he would not qualify to be part of the study. On their way back home, Dr. Newport stopped at a health food store and bought some virgin coconut oil. The next morning, she added two tablespoons of this to his breakfast oatmeal. That day they went back for the rest of the screening and tests. To their utter surprise, Steve scored an 18, and qualified for the test. Dr. Mary continues to use coconut oil and MCT oil daily. In two months after starting this therapy, Steve

was alert and happy, his tremor was no longer as noticeable, he concentrated better and performed tasks inside and outside the house. Before the coconut oil, he was "easily distractible and rarely accomplished anything unless I supervised him directly", writes Dr.

Setbacks have happened especially when he became sick with a viral infection and also when he took prednisone medication when his gout flared up. Mary Newport writes, "He had problems getting to sleep, some confusion about who I was and where he lived while he



Mary. Steve has suffered serious brain atrophy, and will never get back to the 'normal' that he used to be. But he has recovered greatly from the state that he used to be in. He now participates with clarity in his social interactions and his memory loss is not as acute.

Steve's condition in 2011:

His gait has become normal; he can run and takes regular 20 minutes fast walks with his wife. Previously he experienced visual disturbances while reading – the words looked like they were moving around on the page. Now, even though he does not spend a lot of time reading, he is able to accurately read out complex words. If his coconut oil is delayed, he has a mild tremor. Other family members say that his conversational skills have improved; he is able to carry on a dialogue that is pertinent to what is being discussed. His relative short-term memory has improved.

was taking prednisone. This has improved considerably since then."

Apart from the coconut oil, and a healthy whole food diet, Steve also takes the B vitamins, vitamins D3 and E, Vitamin C, Turmeric, Magnesium, Chromium, Zinc and other supplements that are said to help with his condition.

*Dr. Newport's website and blog can be reached through www.coconutketones.com, Her book, *Alzheimer's Disease: What If There Was a Cure? The Story of Ketones* – relates their story, the science of ketones and how they can potentially help many with neurodegenerative diseases, as well as how to incorporate coconut oil and MCT oil into the diet. It also has details on Steve's diet. The book is available at www.basichealthpub.com, at www.amazon.com or www.barnesandnoble.com and also on Kindle.*