



How Coconut Benefits the Brain, Liver, and Digestive System

HEALTH MONSTER

It's been deemed a superfood but has been used for much longer than most of us can imagine—coconut. In all forms, this one food can benefit us in so many ways. Coconut oil is a common ingredient kept in kitchens everywhere while coconut meat can be used as the perfect healthy fat to use in meals. Coconut water is perfect for hydration and electrolytes and coconut flour contains more fiber than wheat bran (and more protein) per serving to keep our bodies satisfied and systems running well. This delicious food is truly a remarkable "do it all" that many of us don't even realize the true potential of.

Fears surrounding coconut oil's fats stemmed from the old belief that all saturated fats are bad. It is saturated fat, however, that produces hormones in the body via cholesterol. We actually need a certain amount of cholesterol in our bodies for our hormones to function optimally. The important thing is to obtain this from plant-based foods versus animal-based foods to avoid certain health risks associated with sources such as red meat.

The best part about using coconut is that it contains no added cholesterol like animal foods, yet it boosts the formation of healthy cholesterol levels in the body, while bringing amino acids, vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients to the table too. One of the best benefits of using coconut oil, coconut butter (or coconut meat), and coconut shreds is the anti-bacterial and immune-boosting properties these forms have. Coconut oil contains lauric acid and certain MCT fats that fight yeasts, parasites, common viruses, even the cold, and bacterial overgrowth in the body.

But that's not all. Coconut can also benefit the brain, liver, and digestive system too. In fact, it can heal these parts of the body in some simple ways you'll see below. Check this out, then be sure to read the tips to pick the best kind:

1. Brain Health



Our brains need fat —plain and simple. All fats will give you a mood boost, but coconut is one of the best fats linked to preventing depression, memory loss, and aiding in stress management. One of the reasons is due to the MCT fats in coconut which bypass digestion and are immediately absorbed. Your brain can turn these into ketones for fuel which your mood benefits from as a result. These fats also enhance focus, ward off mental fatigue, and can help stabilize your blood sugar which also boosts your mood in a whole other way. Coconut's fats and amino acids fuel neurotransmitters in the brain that boost serotonin levels to stabilize your mood and hormones. It can help with PMS, general anxiety, poor focus, and mild depression. Use a few tablespoons of coconut butter, shreds, or oil a day in conjunction with an otherwise healthy, whole foods diet (not a diet with junk foods that diminish brain health).

2. Liver Health



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Coconut's MCT fats help the liver detoxify from waste and allow the liver to use it for immediate energy, not storage. While an excess of anything may lead to fat storage, mild to moderate intake of coconut can be used for detoxification and energy without the need for supplements and over-the-counter drugs. Due to coconut's anti-viral benefits, it also has the ability to reduce toxins that back up in the bloodstream and lead to a sluggish liver. Of course, it should go without saying that alcohol and an unhealthy diet can not be covered up with coconut; you still need to lead a healthy lifestyle. If you're looking to give your body a natural detox and a boost, however, keep a jar of coconut butter (spread, manna, etc.) or coconut oil in the kitchen. Add it to a smoothie with spinach, berries, hemp, some stevia, ice, and a squeeze of lemon for a super detox, healing, and satisfying shake!

3. Digestive Health

A new way that coconut is being used in the health spectrum is for digestive health. Because of the unique way it is digested, coconut does not cause digestive upset; it can, in fact, help with IBS, slow motility, inflammation, poor nutrient absorption, regularity, and can help seal the lining of the digestive tract that may be inflamed from leaky gut syndrome, inflammation, or other gastrointestinal problems. While overdoing it is not smart, a tablespoon at meals can actually have quite the healing effect. Because it boosts your digestive health, it will also in return, boost your brain health and your overall sense of well-being.

Coconut flour is also a wonderful fiber source and protein source for those that eat a grain-free diet and suffer digestive illnesses. It is healing, filling, and will regulate the system without causing ill side effects. And finally, coconut fats fight candida yeast that lives within the digestive tract. Though you can not kill candida it can easily take over the good bacteria in your body and feeds off sugars, processed foods, and a weak immunity. Since coconut builds immunity, supports gut health, and fights harmful bacteria, it's an extremely beneficial food to keep around for a happy tummy, which means a happier you!

And it's really as simple as that—coconut is not a fat to be feared. Fat is not a negative term and the sooner we can embrace nature's best sources that are there to protect and enhance our health, the happier and healthier we will be for the long-haul!

Here's how to choose the best types

1. Always buy organic. Due to the popularity of coconut products, it may be sourced from an unreliable company that uses pesticides or chemicals, or may be processed in a way that damages the nutritional value. Look for the USDA certified seal, not just the word organic.
2. For coconut oil, coconut flour, or coconut butter (manna, spread), only buy extra-virgin, cold pressed, and/or raw. This ensures the coconut was processed at low heat and that you're purchasing the freshest, most quality form of coconut possible. If you buy coconut shreds, always buy unsweetened and raw if you can (not the flaked coconut you grew up eating in cakes and pies by baking brands).
3. Optional, but beneficial: choose GMO-free brands. Most that are organic are today, however, not all brands are. Though this is optional, it's an added security that you know you're paying for the best possible.

For more uses and benefits of coconut oil, see:

- [The Other White Meat: Why You Should Eat Coconut for Strong Muscles and More!](#)
- [Everything to Know About Coconut Flour: The Grain Free Superfood](#)
- [How to Use Coconut Oil to Boost Your Immunity](#)
- [The Amazing Health Benefits of Coconut Oil \(With Recipes\)](#)
- [5 Food Hacks With Coconut: From Butter, to Flour, and Beyond!](#)
- [Coconut Recipes](#)

Do you use coconut? If so, let us know your favorite way and why you love it so much!

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