



The Pulse of Natural Health Newsletter

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Coconut Oil Bad for You?

BY ANH-USA ON JUNE 28, 2017

REAL NOT PHONY FOOD

No. Just the opposite.

Given the evidence favoring coconut oil, why is a **new report** from the American Heart Association (AHA) promoting this falsehood? And why is the media spreading it with headlines like “**Coconut Oil Isn’t the Miracle Food You Thought It Was**” and “**Coconut Oil Isn’t Healthy. It’s Never Been Healthy.**”

None of this is a departure for the AHA; they’ve been saying the same thing since the early 1960’s: saturated fats are bad because they raise low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, which the AHA claims is a leading cause of atherosclerosis (plaque building up in arteries). The Association also believes saturated fats should be replaced with polyunsaturated fats like margarine and vegetable oils, and, in their new report, they claim this switch can reduce cardiovascular disease risk by 30%.

This is a stunning finding, but stunningly wrong.

One of the four big studies the AHA points to as “proof” that saturated fat is “bad” and polyunsaturated vegetable fats are “good” is **a study from 1969**. Although the AHA rightfully points out that the number of men dying of a heart attack was greater in the men getting a “standard American diet” than the vegetable oil diet, it fails to mention that total deaths were the same in both groups. That’s because men on the vegetable oil diet died of cancer at almost twice the rate of the ones on the standard American diet. Further, the researchers attributed the beneficial effect of vegetable oil to its vitamin E content, not the fact that it was polyunsaturated fat.

The AHA has arrived at its conclusions by ignoring a mounting pile of scientific evidence — all more recent than 1969— that exonerates saturated fat as the cause of heart disease and death. Recently, raw, unpublished data from a double blind, randomized controlled trial conducted between 1968 and 1973 with ten thousand participants, making it the largest trial of its kind, was re-reviewed. The results? When researchers **analyzed the old data**, they found that polyunsaturated fats did reduce cholesterol, but this didn’t result in improved health.

The research actually showed that the lower the cholesterol, the higher the overall risk of dying. Other studies show the same thing, which is especially concerning given the overuse of statins, which not only reduce cholesterol, but also bring **side effects** such as muscle damage (the heart is a muscle) and diabetes.

Other large trials similarly show that cutting saturated fat doesn’t help you live longer, including the **Oslo Study**, the **London Soybean Oil trial**, and the **US Multiple Risk Factor Intervention trial**. Some of the trials did show a slight decrease in coronary heart disease from replacing saturated fat with vegetable oils, but mortality from all other causes was higher when saturated fat was cut. (For even more on the scientific analysis of why the AHA is wrong, **check out the write-up** from our friends at ANH-International and **this analysis** from science writer Gary Taubes.)

What about coconut oil, in particular? The AHA recommends flat out against using it because of its high saturated fat content. Once again, they have it all wrong. It’s been proven many times over that virgin coconut oil is a super food and one of the best things you can eat. It **contains polyphenols** which have **many benefits**, including reducing inflammation, protecting your cardiovascular system, fighting free radicals, inhibiting the growth of tumors.

Coconut oil also has promise in **protecting against and reversing** Alzheimer’s and other neurodegenerative diseases. And it is a key tool in a ketogenic diet, which helps people lose weight, control blood sugar, and generally improve health, and can also be used as part of a program of dental hygiene.

Virgin coconut oil also contains lauric acid, a medium-chain fatty acid. A **recent study** shows that lauric acid does not make people fat—just the opposite. It normalizes weight and blood lipids in heart patients and when given to mother mice, lowers the weight of their offspring.

The AHA couldn't be more wrong about saturated fat in general and coconut oil in particular. The question must then arise: why are they saying these things in the face of such strong scientific evidence rebutting them? We hate to say this, but once again we have to look at their donors. Like many other such organizations, they are **supported by Big Food** companies, which have an interest in promoting the oils that the AHA advocates. And the media depends on Big Food for advertising.

Suffice to say, if you're looking for the most up-to-date dietary advice, it would be best to look elsewhere, such as advisors certified by the Board of Nutrition Specialists, integrative doctors, including four-year trained Naturopaths. A superb on-line source is mercola.com.

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