

Coconut oil health benefits

Besides being consumed directly, coconut oil has various health benefits. It can be used for cosmetic purposes to improve appearance of skin and hair and as such, it is used in many natural beauty products. Since it is naturally antibacterial and antifungal, coconut oil is an excellent moisturiser for the skin.

In order to enjoy the health benefits, Fausta Akech, a nutritionist at Healthy U, recommends that you use organic, virgin coconut oil, not the refined one. It can be added to your coffee or tea, yogurt, or can be used in your baking.

Improves immunity

Coconut oil contains some acids

which have antifungal, antibacterial and antiviral properties. It also helps to improve bacteria and gut health by destroying bad bacteria and candida.

"Coconut oil is good for improving immunity because the human body converts lauric acid into monolaurin, which deals with viruses and bacteria that cause diseases like herpes, influenza, and even HIV. Coconut oil helps in fighting harmful

bacteria, such as, listeria monocytogenes and helicobacter pylori, and harmful protozoa," Akech says.

Boosts digestion

Coconut oil improves digestion by helping the body absorb fat-soluble vitamins, calcium, and magnesium. The saturated fats in it help in dealing with various bacteria, fungi, and parasites that can cause indigestion.

Skin

The oil can be used for cosmetic purposes to improve the health

and appearance of the skin. It may be massaged into the skin at night before bedtime to help reduce fine lines and wrinkles. Akech says, "Coconut oil can improve the moisture and fat content of the skin and is anti-aging."

Hair

Using coconut oil is a natural way to help hair grow longer, thicker and faster. Its vitamins and essential fatty acids nourish the scalp and remove sebum build-up from hair follicles.

Dental and bone health

Calcium is an important component of our teeth and coconut oil facilitates absorption of calcium and magnesium by the body, which are necessary for the development of teeth and bones. This helps in developing strong teeth and preventing tooth decay by reducing plaque formation.

