



Superfoods Fact Sheet

Coconut

(Cocos Nucifera)



Part Used: Nut

A coconut is the fruit of the coconut palm, which has been called one of Nature's wonders, and it has provided nourishment and health as well as beauty. It is said to have over 1,000 uses.

Coconuts are always in season, and a mature palm can yield between 100 to 140 coconuts a year. Each coconut takes around 14 months to fully mature. A young coconut is mainly filled with coconut water and has very little meat, whilst in the mature coconut this ratio changes and there is a thick layer of meat and very little liquid.

Coconuts give us not just the sweet meat, and coconut water but also coconut milk and cream and coconut oil.

History and Traditional Uses

Thought to originally be native to the Indo-Pacific region, coconuts spread around the world and became a ubiquitous sight in the tropics globally.

For thousands of years native cultures across the tropics have used the coconut palm and its nuts as an important source of both food and medicine. Ayurvedic medicine recognised the healing properties of coconut oil at least 4,000 years ago and there is a long and diverse list of uses from amenorrhea to parasites, syphilis to ulcers. It is still used to nourish you back to health, speed healing, relieve aches and pains, treat cuts and bruises, speed the healing of broken bones and numerous other conditions.



It is also used by many cultures as a beauty aid and treatment for the skin and hair, and is still used by native healers in every part of the world to treat illness, wounds and disease.

Water – one of the highest sources of electrolytes found in nature. Young coconut water is nearly identical to human blood.

Health Benefits

It would take a book to list all of the possible health benefits that coconuts have to offer, which are wide ranging. Some of the benefits include

Improves digestion and absorption of amino acids	Amenorrhea
Immune booster	Asthma
Improves blood sugar issues	Bronchitis
Improves calcium/magnesium absorption	Bruises
Healthy hormone production	Burns
Helps displace toxic hydrogenated fatty acids	Colds
Cardiovascular health	Colitis
Constipation	Infections
Helps normalise cholesterol levels	IBS
Improved thyroid function	Cough
General Debility	Dropsy
Dysentery	Dysmenorrhea
Earache	Erysipelas
Fever	Flu
Gingivitis	Gonorrhea
Hematemesis	Hemoptysis
Jaundice	Kidney Stones
Lice infestations	Malnutrition
Nausea	Parasites
Phthisis	Rashes
Scabies	Scurvy
Sore throat	Stomachache
Swelling	Syphilis
Toothache	Tuberculosis
Tumours	Typhoid
Ulcers	Wounds

And this would seem to be just the tip of the iceberg – there are testimonials from those with degenerative diseases such as Parkinson's, dementia, kidney disease, diabetes, fibromyalgia and many others who report substantial improvement from just taking coconut oil every day.

The medium chain triglycerides that make up much of the fat content of coconut has been shown to increase the activity of fat-burning cells, making it useful in a weight loss regime, as well as helping to boost the brain and metabolic balance.

Science has begun to look into some of the properties and no doubt we will see more and more studies coming through confirming the traditional know how about coconuts, but there is abundant anecdotal evidence that attest to all the above as well as increased energy, weight loss, cholesterol reduction, insulin stabilization and natural antibiotic and improved healing ability to convince anyone



with a health issue not to wait for science to catch up and try it for themselves.

Coconut water is one of the highest sources of electrolytes found in nature, and the makeup of young coconut water is nearly identical to human blood, to the extent that it was used as IV fluid for wounded soldiers in World War II.

It would seem that coconut in all its forms has an incredible reach and by just taking a spoonful or more daily you can reap the benefits.

Nutritional Value

Coconuts are highly nutritious, and also rich in fibre, but when you look at a nutritional profile it would seem to tell another story, showing a high level of saturated fat, which has been responsible for giving it a bad name in our fat-fearing society.

It is, however, made up of medium chain fatty acids, not long, and these work in a different way to support the immune system, thyroid, skin and nervous system in particular. The important saturated fat in coconut is called lauric acid, which has been shown to increase good HDL cholesterol levels and therefore helps the heart. In fact, these fats are vital for a healthy nervous system.

In addition there are good levels of various vitamins including Vitamins C, E, B1, B3, B5 and B6 and minerals such as iron, selenium, sodium, calcium, magnesium and phosphorus.

Coconut is also a precursor to pregnenolone, a precursor to the steroid sex hormones, and is considered to have anti-ageing properties.

Coconut milk is lactose free and therefore can be used as a milk substitute by those with lactose intolerance.

Coconut water is not only very refreshing, but is also packed with simple sugars, electrolytes, minerals and other bioactive compounds including cytokinin, acid phosphatase, catalase, dehydrogenase, peroxidase and polymerases which all help with healthy digestion and metabolism.

How To Use

Coconut is available in many forms:

As a whole nut – these are usually the mature coconut with high meat content and low water.

Coconut water

Coconut milk

Coconut flesh – fresh and dried



Coconut oil – chose virgin coconut oil which hasn't been processed and is cold pressed
Coconut cream or butter
Coconut flakes/dessicated coconut
Coconut powder
Coconut flour

The slices of chunks of dried or fresh coconut meat can be eaten as a snack, whilst the coconut milk can be used as a milk substitute.

Coconut water is very hydrating and delicious to add to smoothies, but also makes a good sports drink as it is high in electrolytes.

Coconut oil is solid at room temperature, and is very heat stable so it makes an excellent cooking oil as well as making part of a blend of salad dressings.

Coconut, particularly the cream and milk have endless uses in cooking and traditional dishes around the world make full use of it both for main courses and desserts.

Tip: Coconut oil and omega 3 are twice as effective when taken together

