

# Coconut & MCT oil FAQ



**How Much?** [Click here for how much, food ideas, & how to mix coconut and MCT oil](#)

## How can coconut oil be used in food?

Coconut oil can be used in place of any solid or liquid oil, such as vegetable oil, lard, beef tallow, butter, or margarine, for baking (maximum 350°F/175°C in the oven) or cooking on the stove (maximum low-medium heat; 4 of 9 setting), and can be mixed directly into foods already prepared. Some people take it straight with a spoon, but using the oil for preparing foods is a good plan for the long term.

## What kind of coconut oil should I buy and where can I find it?

For the best quality, look for organic unrefined virgin coconut oil which contains anti-inflammatory polyphenols. There are many good brands available in grocery and health food stores, in pharmacies, and online. Refined coconut oil will also produce ketones, may be less expensive, and is usually odorless, so may be an alternative if availability, the cost, or the coconut fragrance is a problem.

## What kind of MCT oil should I buy and where can I find it?

Look for certified organic MCT oil if available. MCT oil comes in various mixtures of medium-chain fatty acids in the US. The medium-chain fatty acids are named C6 (caproic), C8 (caprylic), C10 (capric), and C12 (lauric). The label should say which medium-chain fatty acids the oil contains and how much.

- C8 only: Highest levels of ketones but shorter duration.
- C8/C10: The most common mixture. C10 also has anti-convulsant properties and causes mitochondria (where energy is produced in cells) to multiply.
- High lauric MCT - C8/C10/C12: Lauric acid kills many viruses, bacteria, fungi, and other microbes that have been linked in many studies to Alzheimer's.

## How should coconut and MCT oil be stored?

Coconut oil and MCT oil are extremely stable with a shelf life of at least two years when stored at room temperature. The coconut oil does not need to be refrigerated and becomes very hard when cold. Coconut oil and MCT oil can be stored in the type of plastic container the oils are sold in. Coconut oil stores best in a container with a wide opening, since it tends to be semi-solid at room temperature. Avoid putting coconut or MCT oil into Styrofoam containers (the Styrofoam will melt). Coconut oil may look cloudy when it is partly melted, and this does not indicate a problem with the oil. Coconut oil is semi-solid at a room temperature of 74°F/ 23°C and melts at about 80°F/ 27°C.

## Does coconut oil contain omega-3 or 6 fatty acids?

Coconut oil contains a small amount of omega-6 fatty acids but no omega-3 fatty acids. If coconut oil is your main oil, it is important to eat fish/seafood and/or take an omega-3 supplement such as fish oil, krill oil, or a DHA product. MCT oil does not contain any omega-3 or omega-6 fatty acids.

## **What about children and pets?**

Coconut oil is safe for infants and children. In fact, most commercial infant formulas contain coconut oil and sometimes MCT oil to provide the medium-chain fatty acids found in breast milk! Coconut oil and MCT oil are often used in ketogenic diets for children with autism and epilepsy and could be beneficial to children and adults with Down syndrome, who have abnormal glucose uptake in the brain. A good place to start is with ¼ teaspoon of coconut oil and/or MCT oil for each 10 pounds the child weighs. Many children like the taste of coconut milk as well.

Dogs and cats also love the taste of coconut oil, and most will tolerate about ¼ teaspoon for each 10 pounds that the animal weighs once or twice per day.

## **Will adding coconut oil to my diet affect my weight?**

If you feel you are too thin, simply adding coconut oil to your diet could help change that. If you are overweight, substitute coconut oil for some other fats in your diet, or, better yet, reduce the portions of carbohydrates you are eating, such as bread, pasta, cereals, rice, and starchy vegetables. The beneficial effects of coconut and MCT oil can be further enhanced by eating a low-carbohydrate higher-fat diet. Also, MCT oil is partly converted to ketones and the remainder is used within hours as fuel and not stored as fat. Some studies have found that replacing some other dietary fats with MCT oil could help reduce body fat.

[Click here for a simple low-carb diet that works well with coconut and MCT oil.](#)

## **What other coconut products contain coconut oil?**

Coconut milk is mostly coconut oil and comes ready to drink or undiluted. A can of undiluted coconut milk or coconut crème can be diluted with 1-2 cans of water or coconut water, which is tasty and adds vitamins and minerals. Coconut milk must be refrigerated after opening and used within 4-5 days. Grated or flaked coconut can be stored at room temperature for a few weeks but may last longer if stored in a refrigerator. Coconut yogurts, kefir, and other fermented coconut milk products are also available. Fresh coconut pieces can be stored in the refrigerator for a few days or frozen for a couple of weeks.

## **Can coconut oil be used for skin and oral care?**

Yes! Coconut oil is found in many skin and oral care products and can also be used as a treatment for dry hair. Simply rub coconut oil into the hair and scalp and leave in place for about 30 minutes or cover your hair with a shower cap overnight, then shampoo as usual. Lauric acid in coconut oil kills microbes that cause acne and dental cavities. For oral care, swish a spoonful of coconut oil in your mouth for 10 minutes or longer or brush your teeth with it. To avoid clogging the sink, run warm water and be sure to spit the oil into a waste container or a small disposable cup. Coconut oil becomes solid in cold pipes!

## **Does coconut oil increase cholesterol levels?**

Studies show that adding coconut oil (or any other new oil) to the diet might increase, decrease, or not change blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels, and any change may be temporary. Most studies show an improvement in HDL (“good”) cholesterol. If you or your doctor are worried about the effect on blood cholesterol, consider monitoring your cholesterol level about 2 to 3 months after starting the oil.