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The top cooking oil myths debunked by health expert

The 'cooking oil' debate has circulated the health sphere for decades and has remained a point of controversy in households across Australia. With an endless array of products on the shelf and aisles of choice, it's no wonder consumers are struggling to identify the best cooking oil. According to health expert, Fiona Tuck, the oils you know and love - avocado, coconut, canola and even olive - may not be as good, or bad, as first thought. She debunks five of the most common cooking oil myths.



Myth 1. Extra-virgin olive oil can be used for all cooking needs

"Olive oil is a class favourite and has been given a great rap by consumers and health specialists. The production process is natural, involves minimal levels of interference and it is processed at a temperature (30°C) that will not degrade the olive oil. With no chemicals or industrial refinement, it is easy to assume this product would be a great option for all your cooking needs, but the reality is olive oil has its limits. It is great as a salad dressing and perfect for bread dipping and drizzling over your dishes, but if you heat it in high temperatures, the vitamin E and polyphenolic compounds are compromised. Additionally, some olive oils are plant based and not pure olive oil so it can be a minefield out there to find one that is good quality."

Myth 2. Coconut oil is only available in solid form

"Despite its health benefits, the coconut oil market is limited when it comes to convenience. Coconut oil has a melting point of approximately 23 degrees Celsius and remains solid below that temperature. The majority of coconut oils on the market cannot retain liquid form, making it difficult for portion size and consistency in cooking. CocoEarth has introduced Australia's first Liquid Coconut Oil (LCO). The cooking oil contains only the healthiest part of the coconut and discards the long chain fatty acids that remain solid at lower temperature. LCO is the only coconut oil in Australia to stay in liquid form in all temperatures without going rancid. To create convenience for consumers, the company also has cold pressed extra-virgin coconut oil available in cube form. Shoppers should not need to make the decision between health and convenience, particularly given the over-saturation of choice on the market."

Myth 3. Unrefined oils are the only healthy option

"The general consensus is that unrefined oils are best, but refined oil should not be disregarded. Refined cooking oil has a unique composition that can offer extended health benefits when formed through a non-chemical process, like expeller-pressing. Extreme pressure is used to extract the oil from raw materials such as nuts and seeds which can be used in place of external heat and chemicals. When these nut-based oils are expeller-pressed they become potentially less of a trigger for allergies. Picky eaters can also rest assured that oils such as coconut will not overwhelm their tastebuds!"

Myth 4. When cooking all fat is unhealthy

"People underestimate the importance of dietary fats. They play a vital role in a balanced diet and can impart a wide range of positive health benefits. For a long time coconut oil was frowned upon for its high fat content, but some fats are essential to a healthy diet. The trick to finding the healthiest option lies in the type of fatty acid. Medium Chain Triglycerides (MCTs) are a unique form of dietary fat that have a shorter chain length (six to ten carbon links) than Long Chain Fatty acids (LCTs). The short chain structure offers unique properties and advantages and is a key component consumers should be searching for on the label. These MCTs provide consumers with a natural energy boost that can increase vital ketones and strengthen a person's immune system and metabolism. The accelerated rate of metabolic conversion means fat isn't stored but converted into fuel for immediate use by the body."

Myth 5. Canola cooking oil can give you cancer

"Although it is not the healthiest choice on the market, the claim that canola oil can give you cancer has no substantial evidence. There have however been numerous reports that link the genetically modified organisms (GMO) in canola oil to a number of health issues that affect the kidney, liver and neurological system. Over 90% of canola oil contains GMO, which means it is processed in an unnatural way that involves high heat, deodorisation and the toxic solvent hexane. Chemically or artificially enhanced products should not make the shopping list. Shoppers need to be extra cautious and know exactly what they are selecting off the shelf. Natural is always best, and it is important that the product you purchase ticks all the necessary boxes. The closer the product is to the source the better. Ingredients should be close to their roots and abide by organic and natural farming processes."

CocoEarth's Liquid Coconut Premium Oil contains more than 93% MCTs and is 1.5 times healthier than regular virgin coconut oil. It is 100% non-GMO, convenient to use and easy to digest. Its antimicrobial component, Lauric acid, can protect the body from harmful pathogens. Living up to its superfood name, CocoEarth's LCO has proven to be great for weight loss, stress relief, memory retention and controlling blood sugar levels.

For more information visit www.cocoeearth.com.au

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