

Gift of Coconut Oil

Coconut Oil in its purest form contains many health benefits says Ma. Sigrid O. Dugeno

The coconut is considered the tree of life—nature's best gift to man, for everything about it, from its leaves to its roots, has many uses as either ingredients or in their raw form. But recently, more and more people are discovering the benefits of virgin coconut oil – coconut oil in

its purest form. In retail, it is even more expensive than virgin olive oil. What makes virgin coconut oil (VCNO) different from other oils or from other alternative health products? And from among the many different brands available on the market today, which is the best choice?

VCNO is believed to be the healthiest and most versatile of all vegetable oils. It is derived from the milk of freshly cut mature coconuts and differs from refined, bleached, and deodorized coconut oil extracted from dried copra. The basic difference lies in the scent and taste of the oil, as VCNO richly smells and tastes like fresh coconuts while coconut oil from copra is tasteless and odorless.

Active Ingredients

Laboratory tests show that VCNO is composed of medium and short chain fatty acids (MCFA) or triglycerides. According to Coconut Haven Philippines Inc., MCFA are "quickly digested, goes straight to the liver through the portal vein and is transformed instantly into energy. This means that VCNO does not produce fat." Studies also show that this particular property of VCNO is responsible for alleviating chronic fatigue syndrome in certain individuals.

Multi-purpose

VCNO is a versatile oil that has many uses on its own or combined with other ingredients and oils. Aside from its anti-fungal properties, VCNO is highly saponifiable, making it an effective oil for soap. When used as a carrier for essential oils, it encapsulates the essential oils and prevents the evaporation of volatile substances. On its own, VCNO makes for a wonderful non-greasy, non-staining massage oil. Recently, more and more spas are discovering the value of VCNO as a massage oil. Therapists claim that VCNO is smooth to apply, with a gentle scent that doesn't irritate even the most sensitive nose. Patrons say that VCNO is easily absorbed by the skin and doesn't leave a greasy after-feel.

Stability is one of VCNO's properties, so it does not oxidize easily. Conversely, it lends stability to the formulations where it is used. VCNO is also high in Vitamin E, containing 40 mg/kilogram, making it an ideal skin moisturizer and revitalizer. It is a wonderful base for lip balms, lotions, creams, and body butters, too. Because of its versatility, many health and beauty products have already been manufactured using VCNO as base.

Pure VCNO may be taken orally as a dietary supplement. Three tablespoons each day for more energy is a good dose. It is also good for colon cleansing, ridding the body of toxins, and has been proven to be an effective laxative.

There are also studies that support VCNO's curative effects on digestive problems, such as Chron's disease, irritable bowel syndrome, and colitis. Some people also claim that it is also beneficial to losing weight.

Although VCNO tastes very much like coconut milk, a lot of people may squirm at having to swallow pure oil directly. If this is the case, then mix the three tablespoons of VCNO in your rice or soup to make it easier to ingest. But the more ingenious of producers has come up with a way to address this concern, and this is where flavored VCNOs come in. The flavors range from medicinal herbs to fruits, and they taste so much better than its unflavored counterpart.

Additionally, VCNO's coconutty taste makes it a good salad dressing or seasoning. Cooking with it is also advantageous over regular cooking oil, but the dish will become quite expensive. VCNO may also be used topically as a skin or hair moisturizer or an instant first aid remedy for insect bites, wounds, skin allergies, diaper rash, and other skin irritations.

There are also hair creams, body scrubs, and massage lotions mixed with essential oils available. The special hair oils and creams are very effective hair and scalp conditioners, as VCNO's antiseptic properties kill bacteria and virus that cause scalp problems, like ringworm and dandruff, while replenishing the scalp's moisture. One particular scrub is a combination of coconut cream, VCNO, and apricot kernels



"Pure virgin coconut oil makes a good dietary supplement and is also good to cleanse the colon, detoxify the body as well as act as an effective laxative..."

When choosing the VCNO that's best for you, it is advisable to do some research as to where the coconuts are sourced and how a particular VCNO was produced. There are companies who take pride in their small production, thus they are able to monitor and maintain the quality of their production.

Additionally, run a physical examination. When smelled, VCNO should exude the natural aroma of coconut milk. Taste it, and it should be sweet, thick, and smooth when swallowed. And most importantly, at first glance, it should be water clear. Although VCNO is generally good, the nutrients they contain are greatly dependent on handling and preparation. Hence, it is best to shop around wisely for your VCNO. ●