

# A fat for thinning

By LOUISE MCCOY  
Epoch Times Staff

For two years, there was an opened jar of coconut oil on my kitchen shelf. I was getting increasingly apprehensive about using it, as I had visions of rancidity setting in.

When I was sure the oil must be rancid, I opened it again and took a whiff. It smelled just like fresh coconut after all, and I never found out at what age rancidity does set in for coconut oil or if it does.

Now I use it all the time as cooking oil and shortening and buy it by the litre.

If there were a contest for the vegetable food source that was most replete with nutrition, coconuts would be among the winners.

This article is about just one derivative of the coconut—coconut oil, the fat that thins by increasing metabolism and increasing energy.

Coconut oil is a saturated fat struggling along with butter and palm oil to regain its good reputation among the majority of dietitians, doctors, the Food and Drug Administration in the U.S., and people who think they can get thin by not eating fat. However, it is becoming ever more popular

among those who choose wholesome food.

Coconut oil is solid at room temperature, except in the summer, when it liquefies at about 24 °C.

## ONCE VILIFIED

How did coconut oil get its bad reputation? Before WW II, coconut and palm oil were both used extensively as cooking oils, but these oils became unavailable when the Japanese invaded the Philippines. During the war, hydrogenated vegetable oils were introduced, even taking the place of butter, and the vegetable-oil industry was born.

Heart attacks caused about 10 percent of deaths before the war. In the 1950s, studies came out vilifying saturated fats and cholesterol. By then, heart attacks caused 40 percent of deaths. Recently, in the 1990s, careful studies have negated the early ones that blamed saturated fat for cardiovascular disease, but these more-recent studies are not well-publicized.

In the 1970s, studies were done feeding hydrogenated coconut oil to animals. Hydrogenation destroys all the essential fatty acids. The animals' serum cholesterol increased, and their arteries became coated with plaque. Cardiovascular disease followed.

Coconut oil has now arrived back on the food scene as a powerful

food. On the Internet, people are sharing their positive experiences, while maverick chemists and nutritionists are hard at work to get our health and weight back as it was in the 1920s.

## AN AID IN WEIGHT LOSS

Coconut oil can help you lose weight and help keep you thin. The oil is very easily digested because it is a medium-chain triglyceride (MCT). MCTs are smaller molecules than most fats and therefore do not have to be digested by the bile or pancreatic enzymes. They slip directly into the bloodstream from the intestines, thence to the liver where they are metabolized.

Long-chain triglycerides (LCTs) must be digested with pancreatic enzymes and bile, turned into lipoproteins, and circulated around the body, many of them coming to rest in fat cells, the rest ending up in the liver. A portion of LCTs end up as undigested fat if the pancreas isn't up to par, causing problems.

The direct absorption of MCTs saves energy and increases metabolism, even raising body temperature. There is a stimulating effect on the thyroid, and the body goes into mode for breaking down fat. People eating MCTs for one meal eat less at the next.



COCONUT: Coconut oil has remarkable properties. TORSTEN BLACKWOOD/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Some lose weight even as they ingest the same amount of calories. Fitness buffs in the know add coconut oil to their protein drinks. (Coconutresearchcenter.org/article10612.htm)

## CHOLESTEROL

It will be good news for those with cholesterol phobia that coconut oil has a regulating effect of increasing HDL and lowering LDL, raising cholesterol in those with low cholesterol and lowering it for those with high cholesterol.

Many studies were done testing

cholesterol levels with coconut oil and polyunsaturated oils. The polyunsaturated oils such as peanut, corn, and soy lowered cholesterol more than the coconut oil. That was because polyunsaturated fats "drive" cholesterol into the tissues.

Most arterial plaque is from polyunsaturated fat. One-quarter of it is from saturated fat, but none from coconut oil. (Westonaprice.org/know-your-fats/541-new-look-at-coconut-oil.html)

In a 1981 study of two Polynesian populations who live on two

atolls and whose diets consist mainly of coconuts, it was found that both populations had good vascular health in spite of a high saturated-fat coconut diet. When they moved to New Zealand, reducing their intake of coconut oil, their LDL increased and HDL decreased. (Prior et. Al., American Journal of Clinical Nutrition)

There are very good virgin, organic coconut oils and coconut products available. Buying in bulk is cheaper. Since coconut oil does not spoil or need refrigeration, it can easily be stored.

# Can the Pinocchio syndrome solve the niqab dilemma?

By W. GIFFORD-JONES, M.D.

Can you tell if someone is lying if the face is covered with a niqab (face veil)? It's a current Canadian question as a law court attempts to decide whether or not a sexual assault complainant may be allowed to wear her niqab in court.

Can the "Pinocchio syndrome" and two former U.S. presidents help attorneys decide this issue?

Several years ago, I talked with Dr. Alan Hirsch, a psychiatrist associated with the department of neurology and psychiatry at Rush University Medical Centre in Chicago. Hirsch remarked, "The next time you believe you're getting snowed by a person, think of the Pinocchio syndrome."

Dr. Hirsch claimed that blood rushes to the nose of people who lie. This sudden increase in blood supply makes the nose itchy. The obvious result? Liars will either start to scratch their nose or touch it more frequently.

But Hirsch reports ways to spot liars other than by their nose.

Some liars clear their throat more often or begin to stutter and make grammatical errors when talking.

Body language also aids in separating fact from fiction. Those about to make the big lie usually lean forward, constantly change position, or rest their elbows on the table.

If an attorney is still wondering if a defendant is leading him or her down the primrose path, he or she should take a hard look at the lips. Liars normally tighten their lips or frequently lick their lips, and they tend to swallow and drink more. Liars are also more likely to touch their hair, clench their fists, or take deep breaths.

But how could former U.S. presidents Bill Clinton and Richard Nixon help to decide whether the niqab should be worn or disallowed in a court of law?

Dr. Hirsch obtained the tape of Clinton's appearance before a grand jury on August 17, 1998. Then he obtained one of Clinton's fundraising speeches. These showed that during the



FACIAL CLUES: When only the eyes are visible, can you tell if someone is telling the truth? CHRISTOPHER FURLONG/GETTY IMAGES

grand jury hearing when he was simply providing his name and other insignificant details, Clinton passed the truth test. He also received good marks for the fundraising speech.

But Hirsch reports that it was obvious the truth began to fade before the grand jury. Nineteen

of 23 warnings of falsified facts appeared. For instance, conspicuous increases in sighing, shrugs, leaning forward, and arms crossing could be seen. Clinton was also caught by the "Pinocchio syndrome."

Courtroom lawyers might also make use of the research

conducted several years ago by Dr. A Stern, chairman of the psychology department at Washington University in St. Louis. Stern is an expert on blinking, which was triggered during Nixon's Watergate hearing.

Dr. Stern explains that we do not blink at random. Rather, we blink at times that are psychologically important. For instance, you have listened to a question, you understand it, but now before answering, you take time for a blink. In effect, blinks are like the punctuation marks in writing. And the timing of the blink is what's going on in your head.

So how did former president Richard Nixon rate? Stern reported, "Nixon's blink rate increased markedly when asked a question he was not prepared to answer."

Stern continued, "His speech was well-controlled and he did not manifest any other symptoms of anxiety, but you could see it in his eyes. Most politicians have learned to disguise their feelings except in ways they

cannot inhibit."

Further research shows that liars generally avoid direct eye contact. They tend to roll their eyes as they speak as if they're looking for the next line in a script, which is precisely what they are doing. And liars also tend to look upwards to the left.

The wearing of the niqab should be an interesting court case. I'm sure the lawyer for the complainant will argue that there's more to arriving at the truth than the wearing of a niqab.

The opposing lawyer will argue that analyzing facial features is critical in cross-examination, that the law should allow him every advantage to establish the truth, and that the wearing of a niqab can eliminate vital evidence.

After all, how can you spot Pinocchio's syndrome behind a niqab?

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