

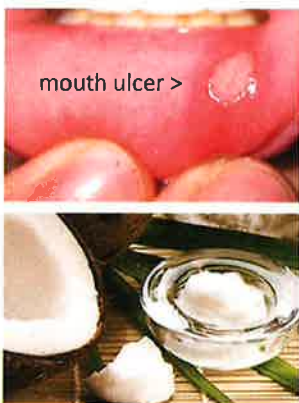
# HUSK & HYPE Of Coconut Oil

There is a lot of hype surrounding the therapeutic benefits of using coconut oil which is both edible and used topically for the alleviation of many symptoms, skin conditions and as a lubricant used in massage and dryness symptom therapy. Coconut oil in its natural form is free of additional chemicals and additives and has been used for hundreds of years. The pharmacological properties of virgin coconut oil has been investigated and have been found to have anti-inflammatory, analgesic and antipyretic (fever reduction) properties exhibiting an inhibitory effect on chronic inflammation in rat models.<sup>1</sup>

The anti-inflammatory properties are related to the 3 fatty acids found within coconut oil, Capric /Caprylic/Lauric acid, these have strong disinfectant and antimicrobial properties which can help protect from invading microbes. These acids are easily broken down and as such are thought to provide quick usable energy.

Coconut oil is a saturated fat with medium chain fatty acids or triglycerides which can help with inflamed and dry itchy skin. The medium chain fatty acids and the Vitamin E components of coconut oil are thought to help retain moisture and therefore reduce the amount of moisture lost through the skin and pores of the skin. Anecdotally the use of Coconut oil has been helpful in the therapeutic treatment of inflamed skin conditions such as psoriasis, acne and or eczema. For those with autoimmune illnesses such as Scleroderma the oil has been used to help with tightened skin as well as itchy or scaly skin by enacting strong moisturising effects.

Vitamin E through its known antioxidant properties also helps with repair and nourishment of skin and helps promote healthy skin, hair and nails. This combines with coconut oils rich source of proteins help support the bodies cellular health and help promote healing. Many people use coconut oil as a lotion to aid scar minimisation.



## Other reported uses:

- Lip gloss and conditioner
- Mouth treatment
- Vaginal lubricant
- Massage oil
- Digestion – IBS
- Weight control -boosts metabolism and reduces sugar cravings
- Teeth whitener
- Anti itch skin treatment
- Skin softener and anti-ageing – reducing wrinkles
- Cracked feet
- Exfoliate for skin with the use of the husk and pulp or combined with salt scrubs.
- Dandruff and scaly scalp
- Hair conditioner
- Make-up remover
- Cooking oil and dressing for salads/vegetables

Coconut oil is solid in cold temperatures; however, body temperature will liquify the oil wad to a usable oil in a short time allowing it to be used as a cream, lotion, oil or lubricant. The oil can be used directly on areas of need or can be used with cotton wool, cotton bud or wadding. Small amount are only needed as the oil will be absorbed and leave a protective layer for a long period of time.

1. Intahphuak S, Khonsung P, Panthong A. 2010 Feb;48(2): 151-7. Anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and antipyretic activities of virgin coconut oil, Pharm Biol.



The Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCI) is the peak professional body of Clinical Immunologists and Allergists in Australia and New Zealand and issue the following warning in regards to allergic reactions.

Allergic reactions to eating coconut have been reported, but are relatively rare. By contrast, contact allergic dermatitis to coconut products is more common. Sensitisation to coconut pollen has been reported.

For more information please go to:

<http://www.allergy.org.au/patients/food-allergy/coconut-allergy>