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The Coconut & Thyroid Connection: How This Tropical Nut Supports Healthy Thyroid Function

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Posted On May 18, 2015 By [Susan Patterson](#)

I have people tell me all the time... “I can’t seem to lose weight no matter how much I exercise, I feel tired and I don’t know what is wrong with me.” Does this sound like you?

3 Worst Foods for Thyroid



The One Thing You Should Be Eating For Your Thyroid Every Morning.



A good place to start uncovering issues is to consider the efficiency of the thyroid. Often, even if your test results say you are fine, the thyroid is struggling to do its job. Without a properly functioning thyroid, it is nearly impossible to feel and look well.

Urgent: [Red wine and your GUT?](#) (study results)

But, don't dismay, there is a really simple, completely natural way to help your thyroid get back into the game.

Not the villain

Once termed a villain fat armed to destroy, coconut oil is now being embraced as the healthiest saturated fat on the planet — and for good reason...

Coconut oil is truly a jam-packed therapeutic bullet that can tackle even some of the most health destroying conditions, including thyroid problems. It is rich in fatty acids, which support metabolism and provide energy.

Over 30 million people in America suffer from thyroid malfunction. As many as one in three women over 35 may be suffering from thyroid problems. Integrative medicine specialist Robin Miller, MD, co-author of *The Smart Woman's Guide to Midlife and Beyond*, says that women are 10 times more likely as men to have a problem with their thyroid.

According to an estimate by endocrinologists, more than 40 percent of the U.S. population is affected on some level by low thyroid function, also known as hypothyroidism. This condition is actually an autoimmune disease, which makes over 80 percent of conventional pharmaceutical treatments ineffective (more on that to come).

FACT: Thyroid hormones are necessary for normal health and cellular activity, and if thyroid function is not normal, weight loss is next to impossible.



Article: [Alzheimer's-Reversing Oil That is Beating Prescription Drugs](#)

Are you exhausted, have memory lapses, thinning hair, body aches, irritability, depression, sleep problems, low sex drive, constipation and/or weight gain? Perhaps you don't quite feel right but can't put your finger on why?

It may be your thyroid — the butterfly-shaped gland that rests below your Adam's apple, just along the front of your windpipe. Comprised of two lobes, connected in the middle

by a bridge, the thyroid serves a major role in metabolism growth and maturation.

Signs your thyroid may be out of whack

Extreme fatigue. If you're always tired, even after sleeping 8 to 10 hours a night, it's a common sign that your thyroid hormone levels are low. Of course, fatigue and low energy are associated with many conditions, but if you don't have enough thyroid hormone (TH) flowing through your body, your muscles aren't receiving a signal to get up and get moving.

Brain fog. If it feels as though you're walking around in a fog all day, are having difficulty focusing, or forgetting things frequently, it could be that your thyroid is out of whack. Too much TH can make it hard to concentrate, while too little can cause memory problems.

Digestive issues. Those with hypothyroidism often complain of constipation, as an underactive thyroid can cause the digestive process to slow. An overactive thyroid gland can cause the opposite problem, such as diarrhea or more frequent bowel movements.

Mood problems. Mood swings, anxiety or depression can develop in those who have thyroid disorders. Anxiety and nervousness are linked to hyperthyroidism as the body is flooded constantly with a message to go, go, go, causing it to go into overdrive.

Do you exercise, eat right and still can't lose weight?

Putting on a few pounds can be caused by many different things, so few physicians will consider this alone as a symptom of a thyroid problem. But if you aren't eating any more than usual, exercise regularly and still can't seem to lose those extra pounds, it could very well be an underactive thyroid.

EVERY CELL IN YOUR BODY CAN BE IMPACTED BY THYROID MALFUNCTION

But... my thyroid test was normal (really?)

"Many people may be suffering from minute imbalances that have not yet resulted in abnormal blood tests. If we included people with low-grade hypothyroidism whose blood tests are normal, the frequency of hypothyroidism would no doubt exceed 10 percent of the population.

"What is of special concern, though, is that many people whose test results are dismissed as normal could continue to have symptoms of an underactive thyroid. Their moods, emotions, and overall well-being are affected by this imbalance, yet they are not receiving the care they need to get to the root of their problems.

"Even if the TSH level is in the lower segment of normal range, a person may still be suffering from low-grade hypothyroidism." — Arem, Ridha M.D., *The Thyroid Solution*, 1999, 2007 revised edition.

Other signs that your thyroid is in trouble (Do you have more than 3 of these?)

 Fluid retention/swelling

- ☑ Frequent viral infections
- ☑ Hair loss
- ☑ Frequent bruising
- ☑ PMS
- ☑ Ringing in the ears
- ☑ Sensitivity to cold/heat
- ☑ Cold hands and feet
- ☑ Insomnia
- ☑ Irritability
- ☑ Itchiness
- ☑ Joint aches
- ☑ Brittle nails
- ☑ Tingling in hands and feet
- ☑ Lack of concentration
- ☑ Constipation
- ☑ Depressed immunity
- ☑ Dizziness
- ☑ Headaches/migraines
- ☑ Hoarse voice

How does diet interfere with thyroid function?

It is thought that diet plays a role in thyroid health. Although low iodine intake leads to low thyroid function, table salt does not appear to be the best option. Many foods eaten in Western culture contain what are known as goitrogens or iodine blockers. Two popular goitrogens are soybeans and peanuts.

A great amount of processed foods contains either or both of these. Grocery store items are full of polyunsaturated oils and many Americans still shy away from using saturated fat, preferring to cook with expeller-pressed or solvent-extracted oils. If you cook with vegetable oil, it is time to stop. These oils are only increasing inflammation.

With the industrialization of our agricultural system, soil has become iodine deficient, further compromising thyroid health. In addition, consumption of refined sugars and grains also negatively impact thyroid function.

Why thyroid medications don't work

Simply gobbling up hormone replacement medication without addressing the root of the problem will not promote health. It is a band-aid solution that so frequently defines Western medicine.

Hypothyroidism causes a decrease in thyroid hormone and it is not as simple as replacing the hormone (a very Western thing to do, of course). The underlying cause of the condition **MUST** be addressed.

It is important to understand what happens in an autoimmune disease. First and foremost, this condition causes the body to attack itself in the same fashion that it would attack a foreign invader, such as a virus or bacteria.

The attack causes inflammation which suppresses thyroid hormones and also decreases the responsiveness of thyroid receptors. You can pump all the thyroid medication you want into your body, but if your receptors are not keen, it won't help at all.

In addition, the inflammation decreases the conversion of T4 (inactive thyroid hormone) to T3 (active form of thyroid hormone). Most of the synthetic hormone medicines (Synthroid, Unithroid, Levoxyl, etc.) are T4, and if you give this medication to someone who has inflammation, it won't work at all because it can't be converted to the active form.

The two root causes of hypothyroidism, immunity and inflammation, **MUST** be addressed in order to restore balance and health to the body.

It's time to feed your thyroid...

Perhaps you have always thought coconut oil was a bad thing... truth is, it is a really, really good thing. Considered one of the healthiest foods on the planet, coconut oil is extracted from the kernel or meat of mature coconuts.

It also contains saturated fat — in fact, it is a whopping 90 percent saturated fat. Don't let that scare you; although you may be convinced that saturated fat should not be touched with a 10-foot pole, coconut oil is healthy.

Although there have been over 60 years of negative public policy around healthy saturated fats, like those found in coconut oil, research and review of cultures that have used coconut oil for thousands of years tell a different story — healthy saturated fat can be highly beneficial.

Research demonstrates that the naturally occurring saturated fat found in coconut oil has some amazing therapeutic values:

Promoting heart health

Boosting the immune system

Providing immediate energy

Promoting healthy skin

Helping to regulate blood sugar

Boosting metabolism

Promoting weight loss

3 fatty acids that your thyroid craves

The unique medium-chain fatty acid profile of coconut oil is what makes it stand apart from all other oils and gives it the ability to help the body self-regulate (something it is quite able to do).

These fatty acids, including lauric acid (found in a mother's breast milk), are small enough that they can be gobbled up by the mitochondria in the cells. Because of this, they provide immediate energy for the body.

Lauric acid is converted to monolaurin, which is a potent antiviral, antibacterial, and antiprotozoal substance. Because monolaurin is a monoglyceride, it can destroy lipid-coated viruses including measles, influenza, HIV, herpes and a number of pathogenic bacteria.

Another fatty acid that coconut oil contains is caprylic acid, also found in breast milk. Also known as octanoic acid, this saturated fatty acid has a number of health promoting properties and the innate ability to treat yeast-like fungus in the intestines.

Capric acid is present in very small amounts in goat's milk and cow's milk, but is abundant in tropical oils, including coconut oil and palm kernel oil.

It is a medium-chain fatty acid that has potent antimicrobial and antiviral properties. In the body, capric acid is converted to monocaprin, a form that can readily fight viruses, bacteria, and the yeast *Candida albicans*.

Because of this unique combination of fatty acids, coconut oil suppresses inflammation and repairs tissue while inhibiting microorganisms that cause the inflammation in the first place.

Metabolism booster

Not only can coconut oil keep infections at bay, it also helps to rev up your internal fat busters to help you maintain a healthy weight. Researchers have discovered that in cultures where unrefined coconut oil is a part of the everyday diet, there is less obesity and less lifestyle-related disease.

In fact, a culmination of studies done on coconut oil and metabolism has found that changing the oils you use every day can help you lose up to 36 pounds in a year. Yep... I said 36 pounds simply by switching unhealthy oils for coconut oil.

The shorter-chain fatty acids found in coconut oil burn quickly in the body. They are like small pieces of dry kindling added to a fire as opposed to a big damp log. The immediate transport of medium-chain fatty acids to the liver means the fat does not have to be transported through the whole body first and does not end up as fat in the blood, but instead remains accessible fat that can be used to power the body.

Medium-chain triglycerides also increase the rate at which the body burns fuel for energy. When you look at the lean and trim bodies of people living in the tropics — who make coconut a staple in their diet — this

makes perfect sense.

A word of warning

I would be remiss not to mention the worst type of fat you should always avoid: trans fat, also known as partially hydrogenated oil. Often included in so-called “low fat” foods, this fake fat is highly dangerous.

The main sources of trans fats are processed, baked goods and fast foods. You must switch to a whole foods diet if you want to help your thyroid. So, sorry, no more Twinkies, donuts, candy-bars or other snack items.

These types of fats raise levels of “bad” LDL cholesterol, while reducing levels of “good” HDL cholesterol. It is best to stay away from trans fats altogether — they offer absolutely no health benefits.

The inflammatory properties of these oils observed by some studies may well be due to the methods used in processing and packaging these oils, and not a property of the oils themselves.

The more natural a fat source is, and the less processing involved in its creation, the healthier it usually is. There are exceptions, such as the hormone-disrupting dangers of soybean oil. However, aside from these known “risk-factor foods,” when you choose natural, it is hard to go wrong.

How to add coconut oil to your diet

As I mentioned in an earlier post, I use coconut oil for everything. It can replace all of the other oils in your kitchen. Raw, organic coconut oil remains solid at room temperature and does not break down during cooking.

You can fry with it, bake with it, drizzle it on foods, saute with it — and also put it on your skin, hair, nails etc... There is no shortage of ways to how coconut oil can truly improve your health — you can even add a tablespoon or so to your [morning coffee](#) for a great energy boost!

The days of badmouthing traditional saturated fats are quickly coming to an end.

Other natural ways to improve thyroid function

In addition to including coconut oil in your diet, try these other natural ways to balance your thyroid function.

- ✔ Switch from iodized table salt to [sea salt](#), as it has more minerals that help support better thyroid functioning.
- ✔ Follow a gluten-free diet, which has also been shown to improve thyroid function. Research has found a link between wheat allergies and thyroid disease.
- ✔ Practice stress reduction techniques such as meditation or deep-breathing. Chronic stress is said to be one of the main triggers of hypothyroidism.
- ✔ Avoid chemicals like [triclosan](#), which is commonly found in items like antibacterial soap, deodorant, lotions, and even in cutting boards.
- ✔ Supplement with probiotics, as good thyroid functioning depends on a supply of healthy gut bacteria.
- ✔ Take a high quality whole-food multivitamin, and make sure you're getting enough iodine, B-vitamins, vitamin A, vitamin D, iron, omega-3 fatty acids, selenium, zinc and copper.
- ✔ Limit exposure to fluoride and mercury — have a good water-filtration system for your home.
- ✔ Follow an [anti-inflammatory](#) diet by eliminating processed foods and eating as many whole, organic foods as possible.
- ✔ Take high-quality supplements, such as zinc, selenium, manganese, chromium, B vitamins, vitamin C, vitamin A and vitamin E (cod liver oil is a good source of natural vitamin A).
- ✔ Exercise — this is especially important to correct thyroid function. Walking briskly for 30 minutes a day is a good place to start.

If you have reason to believe that your thyroid may be working only half time for you, make the switch today to coconut oil. Embrace a healthy lifestyle that includes tons of whole foods, a regular sleep pattern, and movement (every chance you get). Before long, you will not only feel better, but you may be surprised at how well your pants fit!

[Click Here to Discover 9 More Reasons to EAT Coconut Oil Every Day](#)

- Susan Patterson, CHC, CMTA

Susan is the Content Director at The Alternative Daily, a Certified Health Coach, Certified Metabolic Typing Advisor and Master Gardener. With an extensive knowledge of whole foods and wellness, Susan enjoys educating others on how to live healthy and sustainable lives. She presently lives off grid in the middle of the New Mexican high desert with her three children and numerous animals.

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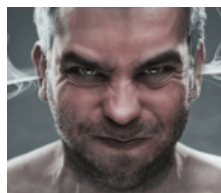
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