

7 Surprising Everyday Uses For Coconut Oil



Coconut oil has become one of the most discussed “superfoods” in recent years. In the past, many people have avoided coconut oil because it’s saturated fat, which was previously thought to be a leading cause of heart disease.

Now, this claim still has yet to be proven by reputable scientific research. And coconut oil has made a comeback as a superfood that not only improves your health in numerous ways but can also be used as a natural ingredient to replace many cosmetics, body care products, and topical treatments.

In addition to using coconut oil in your recipes, here are 7 other surprising uses for coconut oil you may not have heard of.

1. Sunscreen

Coconut oil has a natural SPF of 4-5, so it can be used as a base for chemical-free sunscreen recipes. Many commercial sunscreens contain additives that are known endocrine disruptors, such as oxybenzone, which is why you may want

to consider making your own at home (1). Many natural sunscreen recipes combine shea butter, coconut oil and carrot seed oil, which all contain SPF.

Since the SPF in coconut oil is low, it's important to combine it with ingredients that have a higher SPF for optimal UVB protection if you're spending time directly in the sun. However, it can be used as a natural moisturizer that provides SPF protection underneath light layers of clothing, or when you're outdoors on mild days.

2. Makeup Remover

If you keep a jar of coconut oil in your bathroom, you'll never have to buy eye makeup remover again!

Before washing your face, massage it into your skin with your hands in a circular motion to gently remove makeup. Wash off with a face cloth, and follow with your favorite cleanser, toner, and moisturizer.

3. Homemade Deodorant

The antibacterial properties of coconut oil help fight odor-causing bacteria, and when combined with baking soda and organic cornstarch, coconut oil makes an effective chemical-free deodorant that actually works. You can also add a few drops of peppermint or lavender essential oil to give it a pleasant scent. Just be careful with getting coconut oil deodorant on dark clothing, as it can leave permanent "deodorant" marks.

4. Mask for Dry, Damaged Hair

Dry, damaged hair is the result of protein loss, which commonly happens from over processing and using chemical treatments on your hair. In order to repair the damage, your hair needs to be replenished with protein to become smooth and shiny again.

Coconut oil has been studied for its ability to not only reduce protein loss but to restore protein to the scalp to promote healthy hair growth and restore

shine and texture.

Based on these findings, coconut oil may be used as a leave-in hair treatment or mask, as well as protecting the hair against future chemical treatments.

5. Toothpaste

Remember that jar of coconut oil you decided to keep under your sink for a natural makeup remover? Turns out, it's a multi-purpose jar because you can use it as toothpaste, too. The type of saturated fat it contains is called lauric acid, and it's the nutrient that gives coconut oil its antibacterial properties.

Lauric acid can help kill bacteria in the mouth that causes bad breath and cavities, which is why coconut oil is also used for oil pulling— an oil swishing remedy used to eliminate bacteria and promote detoxification.

6. Lip Balm

Coconut oil is moisturizing for dry, cracked lips and adds a glossy texture, which makes it an ideal chemical-free alternative to conventional lipsticks and lipglosses. It works well as lip balm on its own, but you can also use it as a base and combine it with other natural ingredients such as beeswax and essential oils.

7. Cold Sore Spot Treatment

The lauric acid in coconut oil also has antiviral properties, which may help speed up the healing time of cold sores. Many sources recommend applying coconut oil at the first sign of a cold sore, which is usually tingling, swelling or redness, for best results. Let's not forget, you can also get coconut oil's antiviral benefits by eating it— so add it to your recipes liberally when you feel a cold sore coming on.

It's also a good idea to add extra coconut oil to your diet when you know your immune system is getting low (ie: from high stress, or not getting enough rest and nutrients) because cold sores are a sign of low immunity.

How Will You Use Coconut Oil?

As you can see, it never hurts to keep a tub of coconut oil on hand— you never know what you'll need it for! And these are only a few of the surprising uses of coconut oil, as some sources list dozens of ways to use coconut oil in your kitchen, bathroom, medicine cabinet and DIY home projects.