Best Cooking Oils – Health benefits, Smoke Point, Which to Use and Avoid

There are so many options when it comes down to selecting which oils to use for cooking. That's because when we talk about performance and flavor, not all cooking oils are equal. They differ in flavor, health benefits, heat constitution, performance, etc. And, it will not do you any good if you choose an oil that enhances the taste of your food but damages your body. You may wonder, "What about the health benefits then?" I'm getting there.

While choosing an oil for cooking, it is important to opt for one that remains healthy even after it has been heated considerably. As for some oils, they may be nutritious when consumed in their natural state, but the moment they are processed or cooked, they lose their nutritional value. Some oils break down quickly, loose nutritional value, produce cancer-causing free radicals and other toxins when they are heated. So, it can so happen that the oil may end up being more harmful to your health. It all comes down to what percentage of saturated and unsaturated fats the oil has.

It's not an easy job to go scanning through the aisles of supermarkets, scrutinizing hundreds of bottles of oils and wondering which one to get. So, here's a list of the most commonly used oils and everything you need to know about them when it comes to cooking.

Must Read: ***Best Supplements To Kill Candida and Everything Else You Ever Wanted To Know About Fungal Infections***

1. Sesame Oil – Great for Low to Medium-heat Cooking

Sesame oil is widely used by many health conscious people. It

offers many benefits when it comes to health and ease of cooking due to its percentage of unsaturated and saturated fats. Sesame oil is mostly used in Asian cuisines to add flavor to curries. Being rich in fatty acids like oleic acid and linoleic acid, sesame oil enhances cardiovascular health. It reduces high blood pressure and prevents blockage of the arteries. It has antioxidants that play an important role in flushing out harmful toxins from the body, hence protecting it from harmful diseases, including cancer. As sesame oil has a high smoke point, it is perfect for deep frying or even stir frying meat or vegetables. Apart from all its health benefits and convenience in cooking, sesame oil also acts as an instant flavor booster as it has a distinct flavor. All these factors make it one of the healthiest and most preferable oils.

Must Read: ***Sugar Leads to Depression – World's First Trial Proves Gut and Brain are Linked (Protocol Included)***

2. Avocado Oil – Great for High-heat Cooking

Avocado oil is considered to be one of the healthiest oils due to its healing properties. It is one of the few edible oils that are not derived from the seed but from the pulp of the fruit. How good a cooking oil is determined by its smoke point. Avocado oil has a high smoke point, making it one of the top choices in cooking. It is also used in uncooked items and for seasoning salads and dips. Compared to other oils, avocado oil is high in monounsaturated fat, which is good for the heart. Studies have shown a gradual improvement in cholesterol levels with the consumption of avocado oil. The pulp of the avocado fruit produces the oil, which is rich in healthy fats, including oleic acid and other important essential fatty acids. Avocado oil has another benefit when it comes to health. It can improve the symptoms of arthritis and hence is a valuable addition to an arthritis patient's diet.

Related: ***Health Benefits of Avocados***

3. Ghee – Great for High-heat Cooking

Ghee, considered to be another form of clarified butter is also an essential power food. It is a stable fat for cooking and has a host of health and other cooking benefits. Apart from that, it is also good for the mind and spirit. Ghee has a very high smoke point and hence doesn't burn up easily during cooking. It is also nutritionally rich due to its medium chain fatty acids which can be quickly metabolized by the body. Even athletes sometimes use ghee as a source of energy. Consuming ghee on an everyday basis can build a healthy immune system. If stored properly, your jar of ghee can last as long as three months to up to a year. Along with being anti-inflammatory, Ghee also reduces cholesterol. It is considered good for your nerves and brain.

4. Coconut Oil – Great for Low to Medium Heat Cooking

When it comes to medium heat cooking, coconut oil is your best option. It is decently resistant to heat due to most of its fatty acids being saturated. But it is not suitable for deep frying or high heat cooking. Coconut oil offers many powerful health benefits. It has antioxidant properties due to the presence of lauric acid, which can help kill bacteria and lower the cholesterol levels in the body. Many people believe that coconut oil can raise the body's metabolism, making it easier to lose weight. Some have concerns that the high percentage of saturated fats may increase the bad cholesterol levels. Virgin coconut oil is a better option. It is abundant in healthy compounds that benefit anyone who consumes it.

Related: ***How to Use Coconut Flour***

5. Olive Oil – Not for Cooking

Olive oil is considered to be one of the healthiest oils out there. It is loaded with beneficial fatty acids and many powerful antioxidants. It is a staple in the Mediterranean diet. Though olive oil is often acclaimed for its health benefits, it's not the best oil when it comes to cooking. Despite the fact that olive oil can raise good cholesterol and

lower bad cholesterol levels in the blood, people believe that it is unsuitable for frying/cooking. Olive oil is full of unsaturated fats which are not as stable under heat as saturated fats. However, it can be used as a seasoning/ dressing in salads or dips and for simmering sauces.

However, the recent scandals have shown that many brand retailers have been fraudulently labeling olive oils as “extra virgin olive oil”. In some cases reports claim to find canola oil and other cheaper oils mixed in. The olive oil you find in your supermarket might not be wholesome in nutrition and may even be processed in an unhealthy environment. Hence, always check with your local seller and don’t opt for a cheaper one as it is less likely to be virgin olive oil.

6. Canola Oil – GMOs, Avoid

Another oil commonly used for cooking is canola oil. It is used for stir-frying, grilling, and even baking. It’s true that the fatty acid composition in canola oil is pretty much good. The percentage of monounsaturated fats is quite high, which is again healthy. However, it also contains trans fats and hence needs to be avoided. Canola oil is genetically modified and will become rancid quicker than any other oil. Packaged foods cooked with canola are likely cooked in rancid oil. Canola oil can lead to serious complications like heart disease, metabolic diseases, and even cancer. Despite these risk factors, canola oil is still considered to be good for cooking as it is low in saturated fat and has a high smoke point. But, even though it might have a neutral flavor and can blend with any dish, it is not the best option.

Related: ***How to Avoid GMOs in 2018 – And Everything Else You Should Know About Genetic Engineering***

7. Peanut Oil – Probably Good for Cooking, High Smoke Point

Peanut oil has a mild nutty flavor and a high smoke point and is the perfect option for cooking or frying foods. It is rich

in polyunsaturated fats, which makes it healthier when used in a dish rather than being cooked. However, refined peanut oil is processed under high heat. Therefore, all the proteins are eliminated. So, it’s better to opt for the roasted aromatic peanut oil that is cold pressed as all essential nutrients are preserved. There is one exceptional risk factor associated with peanut oil. It is uncertain whether it suits everybody as most people who are allergic to peanuts may develop reactions to peanut oil as well. However, peanut oil can be quite handy to have on the kitchen shelf.

8. Sunflower Oil – May Perpetuate Inflammation

Sunflower oil has the perfect balance of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, which makes it a healthy oil for cooking. It reduces the levels of bad cholesterol in the blood, and hence, more people have begun incorporating sunflower oil into their diet. But recent research states that sunflower oil might not be as healthy as we think. One reason is that it contains no essential omega-3 fats. And therefore, it can cause issues if someone consumes it regularly as it may disturb the balance of ratio in the diet of omega-6/omega-3 fats. It has a subtle flavor and a high smoke point, which indicate it is more refined after processing. If it is repeatedly heated, it can display some dangerous chemical changes.

9. Palm Oil – Serious Environmental Concerns, Never Use Processed, Hydrogenated, Genetically Modified Stuff

Another one on our list is palm oil. The taste is considered to be savory and earthy. It can be used in many dishes for seasoning and cooking. Derived from the fruit of red oil palms, it consists mostly of saturated fats, which might pose risks to your health. But, it also contains a high amount of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, which creates a good combination for cooking. Palm oil has a savory and earthy flavor and is used in many ready-to-eat foods that you find in

your grocery stores. Palm oil has also reportedly been linked to several health benefits. Its strong antioxidant properties can support brain health and reduce the risk of a stroke. Repeatedly heating the oil gradually reduces its antioxidant capacity and may lead to heart disease. It has a high smoke point, so it is often used for frying or sautéeing.

Related: *The Dangers of Industrial Vegetable Oils*

> ***Avoid Processed and Hydrogenated Palm Oil.*** *In a nutshell, you want to avoid all processed, hydrogenated oils like the plague. Even the amazing health benefits of palm oil are completely negateddue to this harmful process that extends shelf life. Stay safe and keep your shelves stocked with UNREFINED, COLD-PRESSED oils!" – Dr. Axe*

The palm industry is linked to serious environmental issues including deforestation, habitat degradation, animal cruelty, and human rights abuses.

> *Large areas of tropical forests and other ecosystems with high conservation values have been cleared to make room for vast monoculture oil palm plantations – destroying critical habitat for many endangered species, including rhinos, elephants and tigers. – WWF*

How To Store Oils

To ensure that your oils don't go rancid, you need to take care of them in the right way. Store them in a suitable environment so that they do not get spoiled. Avocado oil, palm oil, olive oil, and a few others need to be stored in surroundings that prevent them from getting oxidized. Many health advocates argue that olive oil should be refrigerated. Store all of your cooking oils in a cold, dry, and preferably dark place (not by or above the stove). Keep the bottle clean and shut the lid tightly after every use. We don't recommend buying in bulk quantities as oils tend to have a much shorter

shelf life than most realize. These precautions can help your oil last longer.

When it comes to cooking, we concentrate more on flavor than our health. Try to have a balanced approach, and you will not have to worry about visits to the doc. Most refined, processed, commercial oils pose a threat to the body. Hence, choose an organic form of the oil that has a good flavor as well as health benefits. Make sure to look at the labels closely to avoid highly processed oils. Many labels tend to be fake or make false claims about certain oils. So, opt for a trustworthy vendor and never succumb to cheaper options. Always remember, the more organic the oil, the healthier it is.

Smoke Point Cooking Oil Chart

Oil	Temp	
Avocado Oil	271°C	570°F
Ghee	252°C	485°F
Coconut Oil (refined)	232°C	450°F
Peanut Oil (Unrefined)	232°C	450°F
Palm Oil	232°C	450°F
Peanut Oil (Refined)	227°C	440°F
Sesame Oil (Unrefined)	210°C	410°F
Olive Oil	207°C	405°F
Canola Oil (Expeller Pressed or Refined)	204°C	400°F
Sesame Oil (Refined)	177°C	350°F
Coconut Oil (extra virgin)	177°C	350°F
Sunflower Oil (unrefined)	107°C	225°F

Recommended Reading:

- *Detox Cheap and Easy Without Fasting – Recipes Included*

- *Start Eating Like That and Start Eating Like This – Your Guide to Homeostasis Through Diet*
- *How to Make the Healthiest Smoothies – 4 Recipes*
- *35 Things You Could Do With Coconut Oil – From Body Care to Health to Household*
- *What Causes Chronic Inflammation, and How To Stop It For Good*
- *The Case for Carob – This Chocolate Alternative Has A Lot to Offer*

Sources:

- Cooking OIls – Eatthis
- Types of Cooking Oil – Bon Appétit
- Amazing Benefits of Coconut Oil for Skin and Hair – Style Craze
- Healthy Cooking OIls – Healthline
- The Differences Between Cooking Oils – Thrillist