Fighting Disease With Coconut Oil

It is estimated that five million Americans have some degree of Alzheimer’s disease and that number is expected to increase exponentially as baby boomers enter their golden years. If you have a loved one with this dreaded disease you should know that, in some people, coconut oil slows the progression of Alzheimer’s and may also prevent it. One of those people is Steve Newport. His Alzheimer’s has slowed considerably. Some of his symptoms even reversed, thanks to the unlikely treatment prescribed by his wife, Dr. Mary Newport, a physician who runs a neonatology ward at a Tampa, Florida, hospital.

Dr. Mary Newport became determined to help her husband after the severity of his disease was revealed upon taking an Alzheimer’s test in which the person being tested is asked to draw the face of a clock. “He drew circles and several numbers just in a very random pattern, didn’t really look anything like a clock,” she said. “And the doctor pulled me over to the side and said, ‘You know, he’s actually on the verge of severe Alzheimer’s at this point, he’s beyond moderate.’ So that was very, very devastating news.”

WHAT IS ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE?

Dr. Newport began learning everything she could about her husband’s disease. “It appears to be a type of diabetes of the brain and it’s a process that starts happening at least 10 or 20 years before you start having symptoms and it’s very similar to type 1 or type 2 diabetes in that you develop a problem with insulin.” In this case, insulin problems prevent brain cells from accepting glucose, their primary fuel. Without it, they eventually die. But there is an alternative fuel: ketones, which cells easily accept. Ketones are metabolized in the liver after you eat medium-chain triglycerides, like those found in coconut oil.

So Dr. Newport added coconut oil to the diet of her husband, Steve. Just two weeks later, he took the clock test again and demonstrated stunning improvement. Newport said, “I thought at the time, was it just good luck? Was it a lot of prayer? Was it the coconut oil? And I thought, well, we’re going to keep the coconut oil going,” she said.

Three weeks later Steve took the clock test a third time and continued to perform better on it. And it wasn’t just intellectually, he also improved emotionally and physically. “He was not able to run; he was able to run again,” she recalled. “He could not read for about a year and a half, but after two or three months, he was able to read. Instead of being very sluggish, not talking very much in the morning, he would come out in the morning with energy, talkative and joking, and he could find his water and his utensils.” Steve’s success is documented in a book called, Alzheimer’s Disease: What If There Was a Cure? The Story of Ketones by Mary T. Newport, M.D. (Copyright © 2011; published by Basic Health Publications, October 7, 2011).

ANOTHER KETONE SOURCE?

And while coconut oil is encouraging in the battle against Alzheimer’s disease, there’s something even more powerful available—but at a price. A team of biochemists led by
Professor Kieran Clarke at England’s Oxford University have developed a ketone ester that packs a punch ten times greater than coconut oil. “It reaches quite considerably higher levels,” said Clarke, “and you can get whatever levels you want depending on how much you drink.” The problem is, they need millions of dollars to mass-produce it. “It’s very expensive. And so we can’t make very much of it ourselves,” said Clarke, “And what we would like is funding so we could actually scale up and make it. But of course there’s no real profit in manufacturing stuff like that, and so people really don’t want to fund that sort of thing.”

In the United States, individuals who want to support continued research and development of a domestic coconut oil ester need to contact their state and federal representatives to push for more funding for Alzheimer’s research and for continued funding to the National Institutes of Health to develop a coconut oil ester. This product would be a more concentrated form of coconut oil and presumably have greater effects.

So until a high-potency ketone ester is available to the general public, coconut oil is still a good ketone source. Just make sure it’s pure, in other words, non-hydrogenated. Avoid any hydrogenated oil, including hydrogenated coconut oil, because hydrogenated oils are the same thing as dangerous trans fats. Look on the list of ingredients for the word “hydrogenated,” if it is there, do NOT purchase the product.

INCREASE YOUR GOOD CHOLESTEROL WITH COCONUT OIL

Some people are afraid to eat coconut oil because they think it’s bad for your heart. But it’s actually very healthy. Dr. Beverly Teter, a lipid biochemist, is a researcher at the University of Maryland who specializes in the area of dietary fat. She says years ago coconut oil was criticized for raising cholesterol. But scientists have since learned there are various kinds of cholesterol, some that are beneficial, and others that are detrimental to your health. Fortunately, coconut oil raises the good kind of cholesterol. “So they put out the message that it (coconut oil) increased serum cholesterol,” explained Dr. Teter, “but the truth of the matter is, it (coconut oil) was helping the profile of the serum cholesterol. That never has been corrected in the public press, and I think that’s the reason people have misconceptions about it.”

BEYOND ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE

Dr. Teter believes that the way coconut oil helps the brains of some Alzheimer’s patients can be extended to people with Parkinson’s disease, ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease), epilepsy, dementia, and even schizophrenia and autism. Sam Stout would agree with her. Doctors diagnosed Sam Stout with Parkinson’s disease 7 years ago. He soon began losing the ability to perform many functions. But five months ago he started taking coconut oil and his life changed again—for the better this time. Stout reports, “I can now write. I’ve written letters, which I haven’t done in 3 years. I can swirl a wine glass; I can beat an egg; I can grate cheese. All these things I couldn’t do. And I think I have better balance.” In addition, Stout believes he is experiencing mental and emotional improvement: “I think I’m clear-headed, more clear-headed. People have said to me, ‘You look great this year!’ and I can only attribute it to the coconut oil, because that’s the only thing that’s changed.”

If you ask Butch Machlan, an American living in Mexico City, if he agrees with Dr. Teter and Sam Stout about the benefits of coconut oil he would give you a resounding yes! Machlan has suffered with A.L.S. for almost five years and says his symptoms have reversed thanks to coconut oil, “I can pick up, yea, (picks up a snow globe) and there was a time when I had difficulty with that. Not just picking it up, but holding on to it, getting my fingers to go around it, and that’s gone.” While Machlan isn’t walking perfectly, his legs are stronger since he began taking the coconut oil, and are soon to get even better. Machlan explains his good news, “I have bad knees from the past. But I’ve improved enough that the doctors have said that I qualify for a new knee in my left leg.”

COCONUT OIL—A NATURAL ANTIBIOTIC

Coconut oil is a natural antibiotic but without the negative side effects. Dr. Teter says because of that, it can also help defend against viruses like HIV and herpes viruses. “The coconut oil tends to keep the bacteria down so that if you’re assaulted with a virus your immune system can concentrate on the virus. It doesn’t have to concentrate on 27 other bacteria that day,” she explained.

Fact Resources:
Sources of information used in the creation of this edition of A Closer Look include the book, Alzheimer’s Disease: What If There Was a Cure? The Story of Ketones by Mary T. Newport, M.D. (Copyright © 2011; published by Basic Health Publications, October 7, 2011); Dr. Mary Newport’s blog: Coconut Oil and Ketones; the CBN News story “Coconut Oil” by medical reporter, Lorie Johnson, that first aired on January 5, 2012; and the CBN News story “Coconut Oil Follow-Up” by medical reporter Lorie Johnson, that first aired on January 7, 2012.

About the Author
Mary T. Newport, M.D., grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, attended Xavier University and the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. She trained in pediatrics at Children’s Hospital Medical Center in Cincinnati, and in neonatology at Medical University Hospital in Charleston, SC. She has practiced in Florida since 1983 and is director of the NICU at Spring Hill Regional Hospital. Dr. Newport is employed by the All Children’s Specialty Physicians. Dr. Newport has been married to Steve Newport for 39 years and they have 2 daughters, and a grandson. However, since 2000, she has been the primary caregiver to her beloved husband who first showed signs of Alzheimer’s disease while in his early 50’s. Using her husband’s experience as the case study, in July 2010, Dr. Newport wrote an article, “What If There Was a Cure for Alzheimer’s Disease and No One Knew?” which was circulated around the world and became the subject of a lecture she presented at the 2010 Alzheimer’s Disease International Conference in Thessaloniki, Greece. You can learn more about Dr. Newport and her reasons for becoming an ardent advocate for ketone ester research on her blog: Coconut Oil and Ketones.

Note: Before beginning any new health regimen, it is important to consult your family physician or health care professional first. The information given in this issue of A Closer Look is for your consideration. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Before starting or stopping any exercise routine or nutritional supplementation, please consult your family physician or health care professional about any contraindications that would make doing so inadvisable.

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HAVE OTHERS EXPERIENCED IMPROVEMENTS?

Since the St. Petersburg Times published Dr. Newport’s article “What If There Was a Cure for Alzheimer’s Disease and No One Knew?” on October 29, 2008, she has continued to receive many reports from caregivers about their loved ones, and has also read on various forums and online message boards about people who have had dramatic improvements like Steve. They include such improvements as: better social interaction, better recognition of loved ones, improved conversation, resumption of activities, better appetite, better sleep, having more energy and being more talkative. Many others experience more subtle improvement or very gradual improvement that turns into very significant improvement over several months. Others feel they see no change, but their loved one has at least stabilized and not worsened. Several people have emailed Dr. Newport telling her that until they stopped taking the coconut oil, they did not realize how much the oil was helping them. Dr. Newport recommends that caretakers keep a journal, so that they can decide months down the road if there has been improvement.

She has also heard from some people with diseases other than Alzheimer’s who believe they have seen some improvements, including other forms of dementia (FTD, CBD), Parkinson’s, ALS (Lou Gehrig’s), Huntington’s, MS, bipolar disease, even glaucoma and macular degeneration (which affect neurons).

STEVE’S DIET

Dr. Newport has received many thank-you letters from people whose loved ones with Alzheimer’s were helped after they followed Steve’s diet. Dr. Newport explained the overall eating plan she and her husband follow in addition to adding coconut and MCT oils to their daily diet: “We adhere to a ‘whole food’ diet, and avoid processed foods, and reduce carbohydrate intake overall. We eat fish several times a week; poultry, occasional beef, fresh, or fresh frozen, fruits and vegetables; whole grain bread, rice or pasta (relatively small amounts); eggs, whole dairy, goat milk/cheese, coconut oil and coconut milk. For lunch meats we eat ‘all natural’ brands that have no artificial color or preservatives. We buy organic, cage-free, or free-range meats we eat ‘all natural’ brands that have no artificial color or preservatives. We buy organic, cage-free, or free-range.

STEVE’S OTHER SUPPLEMENTS:

In addition to taking coconut/MCT oil (medium-chain triglycerides), Steve also takes a combination of fish oil and cod liver oil (rich in vitamins A and D). It’s been shown that people with Alzheimer’s disease as a group are deficient in DHA (an omega-3 fatty acid) and DHA is a large component of the brain and crucial to its normal functioning. Dr. Newport referred to a study that showed that people with Alzheimer’s may be deficient in an enzyme in the liver that converts the shorter vegetable form of omega-3 fatty acids found in soybean and flax oils to the DHA and EPA forms of omega-3 fatty acids needed by the brain and other organs. Therefore she believes that it is important to include a marine source of omega-3 fatty acids in the diet. She recommends an algae form marketed to pregnant women, available in pharmacies, to those who have a problem taking fish oil. Coconut oil contains some omega-6, but no omega-3 fatty acids.

HOW MUCH COCONUT OIL SHOULD I TAKE?

The amount of coconut oil an individual should take depends on the size of the person, their age, and their degree of health. According to the article, “Coconut Oil Dietary Guidelines and Suggestions,” by Mary T. Newport, M.D., updated September 2009, and posted on www.coconutketones.com, if you take too much coconut oil too fast, you may experience indigestion, cramping or diarrhea. To avoid these symptoms, take coconut oil in or with food, starting with 1 teaspoon coconut oil or MCT oil per meal. You can then increase the amount slowly as tolerated over a week or longer. If diarrhea develops, drop back to the previous level.

When Dr. Newport first began supplementing her husband’s diet with 100% “virgin” coconut oil, she based her dosage on the amount of MCT oil used in a research study with “promising” results. She calculated that in order to provide the results produced by 20 grams (about 20 ml or 4 teaspoons) of MCT oil, she would need to give her husband 35 grams—or just over two table spoons (about 35 ml or 7 level teaspoons)—of coconut oil at one time, once a day. This amount was needed in order to circulate ketone bodies in his bloodstream for about 24 hours. To make sure that there were no periods without ketone bodies circulating, Dr. Newport gradually increased the dosage to twice that amount divided into 2 daily doses. While the amount of coconut oil recommended may seem excessive to some, Dr. Newport explains that the amounts she discusses taking would not be seen as excessive in areas of the world where coconut is a staple. She even suggests that if a person can tolerate more, or can work up to tolerating more, it may be a good idea to do so. As an alternative, one could take 4 teaspoons of MCT oil once or twice a day, or more often as tolerated. A more palatable option would be figuring out portion sizes of various combinations of foods containing coconut and coconut oil that would be equivalent to at least 35 grams of fat from coconut oil.

Dr. Newport’s research found that after coconut and palm kernal oil, MCTs are also found in smaller concentrations in a
number of foods: in goat and cow’s milk, as well as the butters from these milks; in coconut milk and other coconut products—even coconut ice cream contains coconut oil! Again, combinations of these and other foods containing coconut and coconut oil should total the equivalent to at least 35 grams of fat from coconut oil. The Newports use coconut oil on a daily basis: in oatmeal; combined with salad dressings; as a cooking oil; and on anything that one would normally put butter on, such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, rice, pasta or noodles. Coconut milk is a pleasant substitute for milk, and can be added instead of milk, for example, to make scrambled eggs, French toast, and mashed potatoes. Dr. Newport recommends the book, The Coconut Lover’s Cookbook by Bruce Fife, (4th Edition; Piccadilly Books, Ltd.; November 1, 2010) [Paperback] for many more great ideas for using coconut oil, milk, meat, etc., and easy recipes using ingredients available at most grocery stores.

**INCORPORATING COCONUT OIL INTO YOUR DIET**

According to Dr. Newport, coconut oil can be substituted for any solid or liquid oil, lard, butter or margarine in baking or cooking on the stove, and can be mixed directly into foods already prepared. Some people take it straight with a spoon, but for most people it may be hard to swallow this way and more pleasant to take with food. When cooking on the stove, coconut oil smokes if heated to greater than 350 degrees F. or medium heat. You can avoid this problem by adding a little olive or peanut oil. Coconut oil can be used at any temperature in the oven when mixed in foods.

Coconut milk is a combination of the oil and the water from the coconut and most of the calories are from the oil. Look for brands with 10 to 13 grams of fat in 2 ounces. Look in the grocery store’s Asian section. Some brands are less expensive but are diluted with water. Coconut cream is mostly coconut milk and sometimes has added sugar. Flaked or grated coconut can be purchased unsweetened or sweetened and is a very good source of coconut oil and fiber and has about 5 grams oil and 3 grams fiber in ¼ cup. Frozen or canned coconut meat usually has a lot of added sugar and not much oil per serving. A fresh coconut can be cut up into pieces and eaten raw. A 2” x 2” piece has about 160 calories with 15 grams of oil and 4 grams of fiber. MCT oil (medium-chain triglycerides) is part of the coconut oil and can also be purchased in some health food stores or online. This may be useful for people who are on the go and do not have much time to cook. Also, MCT oil is used as energy and not stored as fat, so it may be useful for someone who wants to lose weight, if substituted for some of the other fats in the diet. Coconut water does not usually contain coconut oil, but has other health benefits. The electrolyte composition is similar to human plasma and is useful to prevent or treat dehydration.

The above nutrition and research information along with support information for caretakers, recipes, and so much more are available at Dr. Newport’s website [www.coconutketones.com](http://www.coconutketones.com).

**IS ANYONE OUT THERE LISTENING?**

You would think that with all the amazing testimonials of the benefits of coconut oil being reported by folks with Alzheimer’s disease—and other crippling diseases as well—coconut oil would by now be the number one treatment prescribed by doctors world-wide for patients suffering with Alzheimer’s. You would think so, but unfortunately, you’d be wrong—but maybe not for long. At the world-renowned Byrd Alzheimer’s Institute, people are finally listening. Dr. Dave Morgan, a physician at the Byrd Alzheimer’s Institute, explains his theory on why physicians are hesitant to prescribe coconut oil as a treatment for Alzheimer’s, “When a patient or a family member comes in with a patient, and they’re interviewing with the physicians, they always have a question, ‘I’ve heard about coconut oil. What’s going on with that?’ and at least up until this time all we can say is there’s anecdotal information, that it may be beneficial, but there hasn’t been any kind of research study that’s ever been done.” Thankfully, that’s about to change with the institute’s first study of how coconut oil affects human beings with Alzheimer’s. If the study finds evidence that coconut oil helps, doctors will finally have the proof they need to confidently begin recommending it to their patients. Dr. Morgan adds, “I think they (doctors) feel uncomfortable making a recommendation for something that they don’t feel (is) justified by the science behind it, and that’s part of the reason we’re going to do the study.”

The Byrd study of how coconut oil affects human beings with Alzheimer’s is using a new coconut oil product, a pleasant-tasting 1-ounce serving of coconut oil in a convenient plastic tube. Unfortunately, because the oil is currently being produced in limited quantities, it is not yet available to the public at large. The company has made a pledge to their existing customers that once they begin to supply them with their product, they guarantee to continue to make the oil available to them for as long as their customers want to continue ordering it. They know their production capabilities and don’t want to over-commit themselves; they want to be able to live up to their word. Good news... the company is ramping up production of the product. They have promised our News department that as soon as sufficient quantities become available to the point where they are able to process new customers, the company will contact us directly. CBN News and The 700 Club will then make the source information available to our viewers online in the CBN News area of CBN.com and within the online version of this fact sheet in the Community area of CBN.com.