

Health Benefits of EVOO

Here are 10 reasons to add Extra Virgin Olive Oils to your menu.....

1 They taste good. Pleasure — one of the best reasons to do anything. Olive oil just tastes good. Extra-virgin olive oils range in from delicate to robust and more people are discovering their interesting taste characteristics.

2 They can help you lose weight. It appears that monounsaturated fats, the kind found in olive oil, when replacing saturated fats, may encourage weight loss. Olive oil consumption has been shown to breakdown fats inside fat cells, get rid of belly fat and reduce insulin insensitivity.

3 You may live longer. Because it is rich in monounsaturated fats and antioxidants, olive oil has been shown to help prevent or lessen the effects of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and certain types of cancer as well as a host of other illnesses and conditions.

4 You might get smarter. Studies have shown that diets rich in monounsaturated fat (the sort of fat in olive oil) can prevent the cognitive decline associated with aging and in diseases like Alzheimer's.

5 You will glow from inside out. Olive oil contains vitamins A, D, K and E, which help protect against free radicals and cell oxidation which can lead to premature aging. Some of the best beauty benefits of olive oil come from the inside out.

6 Your children may be born healthier. Studies have shown that the consumption of olive oil during pregnancy can improve a child's psychomotor reflexes and give them other developmental advantages.

7 You will feel less pain. Olive oil can act as a natural Ibuprofen. It contains oleocanthal, a substance with anti-inflammatory agents.

8 You will have more energy. Your circulation will improve and you'll be able to breath easier. Olive Oil can increase blood flow and help lessen the effects of illnesses such as asthma through its anti-inflammatory properties.

9 You may be more resistant to infection. Olive oil contains high levels of antioxidants, including polyphenols, vitamins E, chlorophyll and carotenoids. Antioxidants are key to strengthening the immune system and protecting the body.

10 The Birds and the Bee's (haha) Almost as important as the fact that it tastes good, olive oil may improve your sex life. Olive oil, in conjunction with Omega 3s have been shown to improve circulation, a key factor in achieving erections and reaching orgasms for both women and men.

Health benefits of EVOO in Diseases

Hypertension

A diet high in unsaturated fatty acids reduces blood pressure as compared to a diet rich in saturated fat. Among unsaturated fats it appears that both monounsaturated fatty acids (like those contained in olive oil) and polyunsaturated fatty acids (found in fish and other vegetable oils) lower blood pressure. An Italian research in patients with known hypertension has shown that consumptions of 40 gm of olive oil a day reduces blood pressure by about 50% (almost half of the patients were able to reduce the dose or stop taking altogether their blood pressure medications). The beneficial effect of olive oil (especially the extra virgin olive oil) is attributed mainly to its [polyphenols](#).

Cardiovascular disease (atherosclerosis and atherothrombosis)

High LDL cholesterol contributes to atherosclerosis and atherothrombosis, depositing cholesterol in the artery wall and clogging the arteries of vital organs (like the heart, brain, and kidneys). HDL cholesterol is the “good” cholesterol and acts as a scavenger, removing cholesterol from plaques in the artery wall. Reducing LDL cholesterol and raising HDL cholesterol has significant health benefits and protects against heart attacks, strokes, and sudden death. Consumption of about two table spoons of olive oil reduced LDL (the “bad” cholesterol) and mildly raise HDL (the “good” cholesterol).

Beyond a favorite effect on LDL and HDL levels, **olive oil has two more benefits that reduce heart attacks and stroke:**

- It prevents oxidization of LDL which renders it more atherogenic than its non-oxidized form. This beneficial effect of olive oil on lipids is mediated through its antioxidant components, especially [polyphenols](#) and vitamin E.
- It reduces the chance of “thrombosis” (clot formation) in arteries by reducing factors that either cause clotting (plasma factor VII) or inhibit break-down of clots already formed (plasminogen activating inhibitor)

Type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome

Olive oil reduces the metabolic complications of type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome. With its [polyphenols](#) and squalene components it reduces the high level of inflammatory activity present in both diabetes and metabolic syndrome. Thus, olive oil helps reduce LDL-the “bad”-cholesterol, lipid oxidation and high blood pressure. A diet rich in olive oil also facilitates glycemic control by leaving “less room” for carbohydrates (particularly “simple sugars” that cause insulin spikes and premature hunger attacks).

Alzheimer’s disease

Inflammation and free radicals damage brain cells and impair synaptic function, contributing to the neurodegeneration and brain cell loss that characterizes Alzheimer’s disease. The squalene content of olive oils (along with its other antioxidants) has neuroprotective effects and does not allow oxidation of its monounsaturated fatty acids (which unfortunately occurs with polyunsaturated fats that may, thus, contribute to nerve damage). Oleocanthal, another olive oil component has been shown in scientific research to slow down the progression of Alzheimer’s.

Aging and longevity

Free radicals attack and damage cells and its constituents, especially DNA found not only in the cell nucleus but also in the mitochondria. It is hypothesized that olive oil with its antioxidant effects inhibit peroxidation and reduces mitochondrial DNA damage, preserving vitality and youthfulness. It appears that the oleocanthal component of olive oil significantly contributes to olive oil’s anti-aging effects. There is a report of a 120-year-old Israeli woman who used to drink a glass of olive oil every day!

A Myriad of health Benefits Associated with Consuming Premium EVOO

Could something in your kitchen cabinet help you lose weight and prevent cancer? It's something many people don't associate with weight loss or even health.

Some refer to this weight loss food as "liquid gold" because of its color and the fact that it's rich in nutrients.

A local research dietitian swears by this particular ingredient and has done local studies on its power to help us lose weight and prevent prostate and breast cancers.

And here's the irony: It's high in fat.

If you want to trim your waistline, try consuming at least three tablespoons a day of extra virgin olive oil.

Mary Flynn, a registered dietitian and researcher at The Miriam Hospital, has the proof to back it up. She recently completed two weight loss studies. One looked at an olive oil plant-based diet to prevent breast cancer; the other to see if that same diet could prevent prostate cancer.

"What we were looking at was when men are treated for recurrent prostate cancer, they're treated very often with a therapy that blocks the testosterone. And when this happened it increased their risk factors for heart disease by increasing the metabolic syndrome, which is a large waist, an increase in the triglycerides, decrease in HDL, the blood pressure goes up and glucose goes up," Flynn said.

In all, 18 men took part in the plant-based olive oil diet. "I asked them to use at least three tablespoons a day, which I put as part of the meal plan and the recipes and then it focuses mainly on vegetables," Flynn said.

Vegetables in this Mediterranean-like diet are unlimited. Fruits are limited to about three servings a day, and whole grains are emphasized.

"The beauty of the diet is the volume is large. So, your stomach is full and then you have the fat, the olive oil being used to prep the meal so you don't get hungry between the meals. And so I see snacking go down," Flynn said. Flynn found in this hospital-funded study that men not only lost weight, they embraced the new way of eating.

She already knew women were benefiting. It's what led to her publishing this book, "The Pink Ribbon Diet," which was borne out of an earlier study of 44 overweight women diagnosed with invasive breast cancer.

In that study, women who followed the plant-based olive oil plan lost weight and lowered their triglycerides -- a type of fat found in the blood -- and raised their good cholesterol.

Despite its name, the book is for anyone trying to lower their weight and risk for disease.

"It's mainly a cookbook. It gives the rationale for why I choose the foods that I do, I think, as well as 150 very easy recipes," Flynn said.

The olive oil diet used in Flynn's studies includes at least those three tablespoons of olive oil a day and a lot of vegetables. Red meat was not allowed, but limited amounts of poultry and fish were.

Scientists ID heart-healthy element in EVOO

When it comes to heart health, olive oil continues to trump other oils for its ability to protect the heart from failing and arteries from hardening. Portuguese researchers showed that one particular antioxidant in olive oil — DHPEA-EDA — protects red blood cells from damage more than any other part of olive oil. The discovery could lead to the development of functional oils designed to protect the human body from heart disease. "Now we have identified the importance of these compounds, producers can start to care more about the polyphenolic composition of their oils," said Fatima Paiva-Martins, assistant professor at the Faculty of Sciences at University of Porto in Portugal and lead researcher for the polyphenolic compounds research team.

"These findings provide the scientific basis for the clear health benefits that have been seen in people who have olive oil in their diet," said Paiva-Martins.

It is well known that heart disease is caused partly by reactive oxygen, including free radicals, acting on LDL or "bad" cholesterol, which causes hardening of the arteries. Red blood cells are particularly susceptible to oxidative damage because they are the body's oxygen carriers.

In the study, published in *Molecular Nutrition & Food Research*, Paiva-Martins and colleagues compared the effects of four related polyphenolic compounds on red blood cells subjected to oxidative stress by a known free radical generating chemical.

DHPEA-EDA was the most effective and protected red blood cells even at low concentrations. The researchers said the study provides the first evidence that this compound is the major source of the

health benefit associated with virgin olive oils, which contain increased levels of DHPEA-EDA compared to other oils. In virgin olive oils, DHPEA-EDA may make up as much as half the total antioxidant component of the oil.

To access the full article: [Effects of olive oil polyphenols on erythrocyte oxidative damage](#); Paiva-Martins, F., et al.

How Olive Oil Reduces Inflammation

While tasting extra-virgin olive oils in Sicily, Gary Beauchamp, PhD, director of the Monell Chemical Senses Center in Philadelphia, noticed a ticklish, peppery sensation in the back of his throat. It was nearly identical to the “sting” he’d felt when swallowing a liquid form of [nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs](#) (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen and aspirin, during previous sensory studies. Beauchamp detected a connection between olive oil and inflammation.

Further studies revealed that a compound in the oil, called oleocanthal, prevents the production of pro-inflammatory COX-1 and COX-2 enzymes – the same way NSAIDs work.

“By inhibiting these enzymes, inflammation and the increase in pain sensitivity associated with them is dampened,” says Paul Breslin, PhD, co-author of the study. Researchers found the intensity of the “throaty bite” in an oil is directly related to the amount of oleocanthal it contains. “Stronger-flavored oils from Tuscany or other regions that use the same olive varietal, have the highest oleocanthal levels,” says Breslin.

The olive oil-inflammation study’s researchers say that 50 milliliters (ml), which is about 3 1/2 Tbsp., is equal to a 200-mg tablet of ibuprofen. Breslin points out that amount of oil has more than 400 calories – a lot if you add this healthy fat without giving up others. To avoid excess calories, use extra-virgin olive oil in lieu of other fats, such as butter.