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## The role of coconut and coconut oil in coronary heart disease in Kerala, south India.

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Coronary heart disease (CHD) is common in India and, recently, an increase in the incidence of CHD was reported from the South Indian state of Kerala. The traditional Indian diet is low in fat content. The high incidence of CHD in Indians is, therefore, in contrast to western studies that have correlated high fat, saturated fat and cholesterol intake to CHD. Consumption of coconut and coconut oil that contain high amounts of saturated fat and are thought to be strongly atherogenic, are believed to be one of the main reasons for the high incidence of CHD in Kerala. To explore this presumed link, we studied 32 CHD patients and 16 age and sex matched healthy controls. Consumption of coconut and coconut oil was found to be similar in both groups. The groups did not differ in the fat, saturated fat and cholesterol consumption. The results imply no specific role for coconut or coconut oil in the causation of CHD in the present set of Indian patients from Kerala. The exact reason for the high and increasing incidence of CHD among Indians is still unknown.

Publication Types:

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