

# 107 *everyday uses for* COCONUT OIL



There's been a lot of hype about coconut oil lately, and there are so many claims being made that it sounds nothing short of a miracle. Well it's really not a cure-all, and what works for other people may not work for you, but it still is pretty dandy to have around. With a little bit of resourcefulness and a dash of creativity, you can find over one hundred ways to utilize this handy product.

### **1. Moisturize Your Skin**

The very first thing on this list, before even delving into the "edible" benefits of coconut oil, has to be moisturizing. In lieu of your regular lotion, coconut oil delivers a refreshing, healing, burst of moisture that penetrates your skin and works to truly heal it (not just soak in and dry up!) It can feel oily at first, but that's why it's important to only use a little-it goes a long way. Give it a minute and it will dry beautifully. Use as you would regular lotion.

### **2. Conditioner**

When the teeny tiny overlapping plates that make up our outer hair shaft get rumped and out of whack, coconut oil is there to smooth those tiny little cells right back into place, and hold them there. You can use it on your entire scalp/head for deep conditioning, but you can generally just use it on your ends, where it's the hardest for the body's natural oils to reach, and where the most breakage occurs.

### **3. Make Homemade Soap**

If you're interested in soap making, coconut oil serves as a wonderful pure base that can simplify ingredients, add hardness to the soap, and help break down grease and oils. It can break them down so effectively, in fact, that too much will have a drying effect (when in soap form.) To prevent this, you need to "superfat" your soap-that is, adding more oil than the lye turns to soap. All you need is coconut oil, water, and lye. Don't be shy of lye. While it should be handled with care, I find it essential to soap making, and it eliminates a slew of other chemicals that you would need to add to recreate its effects.

### **4. Weight Loss**

Coconut oil and weight loss-what's really going on? Well, if you sit around eating coconut oil, you aren't going to lose weight. However, if used to substitute other fats, it can help you drop the pounds by taking the place of those other calories. Unlike most saturated fats, it's mainly comprised of medium chain fatty acids, versus long chain fatty acids. This difference in molecular structure means that it doesn't get packed away as fat as easily and instead is sent straight to the liver to be metabolized, giving you a boost in energy. This energy in turn makes exercising easier, and the exercise in turn helps you lose weight. Another major factor that it plays is as an appetite suppressant. Craving something you shouldn't be? Have a tablespoon or 2 of coconut oil, and that sensation won't last long!

### **5. Energy Booster**

If weight loss isn't your goal, just run with the fact (no pun intended) that it gives you a great boost in energy-and who doesn't need some help in that department every now and again? Some people also feel it helps boost their mental alertness.

## **6. Prevent Stretch Marks**

There is no proven way to completely prevent stretch marks- if or how extreme you get them actually comes down largely to genetics-but anecdotal evidence is strong: keeping your belly soft and moisturized seems to help. Coconut oil is deeply nourishing, and doesn't just provide empty moisture that dries up quickly. Rich in fatty acids and vitamin E, it penetrates the skin to provide moisture and (possibly) elasticity, as well as forming a barrier to help retain moisture. Apply 1-2 times daily over the course of pregnancy.

## **7. Itchy Dogs**

My pup has atopic dermatitis, also known as the world's worst allergies. He gets goopy eyes, scabby ears from scratching them too much, and will literally scratch himself raw and bloody without treatment. In addition to his daily care regime, he gets coconut oil. From the inside out, coconut oil can help nourish the dry, irritated, or inflamed skin that is the result of the inappropriate response to various allergens. It did not cure him of his allergies, though there are people who say it has gotten rid of their dog's allergies completely, but it does help reduce the itching. If your pup chews their paws and stains them red/pink/brown it can help in that department as well, as that is also a sign of allergies. Start with ½ teaspoon a day and work your way up to 1 tablespoon for 40+ pound dogs, and 1-2 teaspoons for dogs that weigh less. They usually go crazy for it!

## **8. Fungal Infections**

The medium chain fatty acids found abundantly in coconut oil are incredibly effective natural fungicides. In a (coco)nut shell, they naturally insert themselves into the fungal membrane, which is crucial to maintaining the life of the fungus. This destruction of the membrane leads to the destruction of the fungus as a whole and voila! The fungus is eradicated. It is important to be diligent with applications of the coconut oil until your symptoms have cleared.

## **9. Cold Sores**

Cold sores are caused by the herpes simplex virus, generally type 1, and as such they have no cure. If you harken back to science class, you'll recall that bacteria can be wiped out, while a virus cannot. So how can coconut oil possibly help? It doesn't wipe out the virus, but it can inhibit its assembly and how it spreads. Coconut oil contains a substance known as lauric acid. When combined with glycerol, it creates a substance known as monolaurin. Studies done so far have shown that monolaurin affects the lipid envelope of the virus, and prevents the virus from reproducing how it normally would. In turn, it is not able to spread as efficiently and tends not to last as long. Apply a bit of coconut oil directly to the sore several times a day.

## **10. Coffee Creamer**

In replacement of higher calorie coffee creamers (such milk and sugar) stir a little coconut oil into your coffee for a sweet (but not "too sweet") and healthy touch. Make sure to stir it in well! If you notice it floating to the top, try stirring partway through your drink, or just add a little less next time. Make sure your joe is piping hot when you add it in, otherwise you might get some unwanted unmelted coconut oil popping up.

## **11. Healthy Wood Polish**

Most wood polish coats surfaces in a slick layer of synthetic chemicals, which makes the wood look all sleek and shiny...for a little bit. Coconut oil, on the other hand, sinks into the wood and keeps it looking “healthy” longer. The appearance is much more natural, and it stays that way. It may not look as dramatic as a store bought polisher, but I find it a much more pleasant and effective option to keeping wood looking it’s best.

## **12. Lower Cholesterol and Risk of Heart Disease**

Cholesterol is a waxy substance found your cells, which helps continuously build more vital cells. It goes about its way through your blood stream attached to proteins known as lipoproteins. There are low-density lipoproteins (LDL) and high-density lipoproteins (HDL.) HDL is the “good” cholesterol-you want to lower LDL, but raise HDL. LDL carries cholesterol throughout your body and delivers it to organs and tissues. The problem is, if you have too much cholesterol, the excess keeps circulating. The constantly circulating LDL will eventually penetrate blood vessel walls where they build up plaques and narrow blood vessels, sometimes to the point blocking blood flow, causing coronary artery disease. HDL, on the other hand, picks up excess cholesterol and brings it to your liver to be broken down. Coconut oil, probably due to its high levels of lauric acid, will boost HDL. There’s no solid evidence saying that coconut oil alone will prevent heart disease, but there is solid evidence that it boosts HDL, therefore lowering cholesterol, and hypothetically reducing the risk of heart disease. Take ½-1 tablespoon daily.

## **13. Reduce Risk (or effect) of Alzheimer’s**

Alzheimer’s is devastating to all who experience it, whether personally or with a friend or family member. It is no wonder that we search so desperately for a cure. The word that coconut oil could possibly “cure” or prevent Alzheimer’s started circulating with vigor when a pediatrician published a book about feeding coconut oil to her husband, who suffered from Alzheimer’s, and got positive results. Other studies have confirmed that ketones, which are essentially “brain food” provided to keep the brain functioning when the body runs lower on glucose, can help improve memory, and potentially “reverse” the effects of Alzheimer’s. It’s a much more complex subject and process, but that’s it in a really wrapped up nutshell. The dosing that I have uncovered implies 2 teaspoons taken daily with food to help improve cognitive function.

## **14. Soothe Fly Bites**

Oh the sweet relief of coconut oil. When the black flies start biting, it’s the first thing to reach for. I use it the most on my horse come summertime to soothe any nasty bites that she gets, but don’t hesitate to dab a little on myself (or the dogs.) Just get a little on your fingertips and apply it directly to the bite.

## **15. Fight Acne**

Our bodies are rich with bacteria that are naturally present, and necessary, to maintain our health. There are instances though where some people find themselves with a specific strain of bacteria (generally thought to be *Propionibacterium acnes*) that grows its population past the point of being welcome, as too much of it causes acne. While *P. acnes* is becoming increasingly resistant to antibiotics, coconut oil is an all-natural way to reduce the overgrowth. You can also mix in a little drop of tee tree oil for an extra anti-bacterial kick. Be aware that tea tree has a very...distinct aroma. Not bad per say, just strong.



## **16. Oil/Butter Replacement**

There's no better way to get the benefits of coconut oil than to replace other less desirable fats with it. When cooking or baking, substitute it for butter or just about any oil. It lends moisture, freshness, and richness to baked goods, and a subtle complimentary flavor to savory dishes. How much you substitute will depend on the recipe you are making. For baking, most people will fall in the 1:1 ratio or 80% coconut oil 20% water when subbing for butter. For basic cakes, cookies, and brownies I find 1:1 to be sufficient. When it comes to more complex pastries that get their flaky puffiness when steam is escaping, you may find yourself tweaking the amount a little. For oil substituting, subbing 1:1 is a good route to go.

## **17. SPF Lip Balm**

Lips are quite exposed to the elements, and it's not like there are "lip scarves" or "mouth mittens" to protect them from the harsh world. One thing that's especially over-looked is sun exposure. You should really apply sunscreen to your lips for full protection, but coconut oil also has a mild SPF protection. It can't rival SPF 80 (indeed it has an SPF of about 4-6) but even that little bit can help. Apply some coconut oil just before heading out into the sun, and reapply every few hours. I like to melt mine down with just ¼ teaspoon or so of beeswax, as I find it easier to apply, and it has more staying power.

## **18. Exfoliating Body Scrub**

One of my personal favorite uses for coconut oil is serving as a base for body or face scrubs. You can melt some down, stir in some sugar, let it cool, and then use as is. Or, for a fun little project, melt down about a half cup of coconut oil and pour into a muffin tin, soap mold, or anything of the like, and stir in 2-4 tablespoons of white or brown sugar. You can add more if you would like the texture to be coarser. I usually let it cool some before adding the sugar so you don't just dissolve the grains. Pop it in the fridge and let it solidify and cool completely before removing from the mold. Slice off a piece when needed and use it to gently scrub and exfoliate your face/body (dampen your skin with water first.) Rinse off, apply moisturizer, and resist the urge to use it again until later in the week, otherwise you run the risk of drying your skin out.

## **19. Make-Up Remover**

Make-up is on your face. Your face is something you would like to protect. So when it comes to removing make-up, don't turn for harsher store bought products. Go instead to coconut oil, which gently and safely removes all traces of make-up (and leaves your face feeling healthy and refreshed.) Simply scoop some onto your fingertips (it will melt quickly as you use it) and rub it over make-up in a circular motion, rinsing with water afterwards to remove traces of makeup and patting your face dry. It works well with eye make-up, waterproof or not, as well. You can use a mild soap if you wish to remove all traces of the oil.

## **20. Massage Oil**

The benefits of massage are countless, and we could all use one now and again. Rather than using a heavy lotion, simply use coconut oil. You can add essential oils for scent if you like, but I find the smell of coconut oil alone to be heavenly. It also leaves your skin truly moisturized and soft.

## **21. Nail and Cuticle Treatment**

Cuticles get raggedy, nails get broken, chipped, or dull, and it's not unusual for them to need some TLC every now and then. While there is a plethora of store-bought creams designed specially to miraculously make them look ready for a photo shoot, they are typically over-priced and filled with weird ingredients. This is where coconut oil comes in. Rub a little into your cuticles and over/around your nails to help smooth out flaws and encourage healthy growth.

## **22. Diaper Cream**

Got a little one with a chapped or irritated bum? Look no further than pure coconut oil. I prefer it over the hodge-podge of ingredients found in store bought creams-I like to know what I am putting down there! With its antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral actions, plus its soothing and moisturizing benefits, it makes the ideal "DIY" diaper cream. For a little extra soothing power, try melting it with a bit of shea butter and whipping the two together after they have solidified some. Apply only as much as needed to affected area as you would any other diaper cream.

## **23. Nipple Cream**

There's nothing more magical than breastfeeding...right?? As amazing as it is, you just can't ignore the painful cracked or chaffed nipples that often times come with it. And if you need nipple cream, you sure as heck don't want to be putting anything strange where your little one is going to be putting their wee mouth. After breastfeeding, and a couple of times a day as needed, gently rub a small amount of coconut oil on and around the nipple. After you finish breastfeeding, be sure to pat the area dry before applying the coconut oil.

## **24. Shaving Cream**

Nothing is more frustrating than lathering up with a bunch of shaving cream in the shower just to have to all melt off again as the water hits it. Luckily, water rolls right off oil, which means you have solid protection that allows your razor to glide smoothly over your skin. It also leaves it soft, moisturized, and safe from painful bumps and burns. Apply as you would any other cream before shaving.

## **25. Fight Inflammation**

Coconut oil appears to have a direct effect on suppressing the natural chemicals responsible for mediating inflammation. The studies that have been done on this action so far point to lauric acid and capric acid as the biggest contributors, both of which are part of the magnificent medium chain fatty acids found naturally in coconut oil (capric acid alone makes up roughly 10% on its own.)

## **26. Leather Polish**

Use a soft dry cloth to brush any excess dirt or dust off leather and apply a small amount of coconut oil, rubbing it in in a circular motion. There's no need to go overboard here! Buff to a healthy shine with a soft cloth.

## **27. Remove Chewing Gum**

Why does coconut oil remove chewing gum? I don't know, but I don't feel the need to question it. Whether its ground into your carpet or your kid is panicking because they think they have to chop off a big chunk of gummy hair, coconut oil has a weird way of getting the stuff out. Most likely, it sinks in and just makes it so the whole glob glides out over the fibers/hairs easily. This is one case where you can feel free to apply liberal amounts. Rub it thoroughly over the chewing gum and let it sit for 2-5 minutes (or longer, if you deem it necessary.) Use a soft, textured cloth to wipe the gum away. Follow up with a mild soap rinse (or shampooing) to remove any excess oil.

## **28. Get Rid of Soap Scum**

Soap is alkaline, and most oils are acidic. This is part of why soap works so well against grease and grime, most of which is stuck to us with oil. Apply a thin layer coconut oil to the soap scum and let it sit for 10-20 minutes. Wipe away with the rough side of a sponge, if the surface allows. For a little extra kick, mist the coconut oil with some vinegar after applying it to boost the acidity.

## **29. Season Cast Iron Pans**

"Seasoning" a cast iron pan is the act of creating a fatty layer that coats the pan, protects it, and also acts as a non-stick surface. Season with coconut oil the same as you would any other type of fat. Typically I will apply a generous coating of coconut oil to the inside of the pan and let it sit in a 250-350 degree (Fahrenheit) oven for an hour or so. Place a cookie sheet under it and let the pan lie upside down if you are worried about oil pooling and smoking. Remove the pan, let it cool, and wipe out any excess oil. Repeat as needed.

## **30. Deodorant**

Sweat on its own typically doesn't smell. In fact, most sweat doesn't smell at all, since most sweat glands on our body are eccrine, which produces mostly water with some salt and maybe some uric acid. Apocrine sweat glands become active during puberty, and produce sweat from our underarms, around the genitals, etc. The sweat from apocrine glands has other stuff in it, such as lipids (fats.) When the bacteria on our skin feed on these fats, the byproducts smell. Like store-bought deodorant, coconut oil helps decrease the bacteria count that's causing the odor. Mix about a tablespoon of arrowroot powder into 3-4 tablespoons of coconut oil for an easy homemade deodorant. Apply as needed; adding beeswax to solidify it some if you feel the coconut oil is too thin on its own.

## **31. Bath Oil**

Soften your bath water, and your skin, with a bit of coconut oil. Enjoy its lovely aroma and gently swish it around now and then to swirl it through the water. It will naturally coat your skin, leaving it smooth and healthy.

## **32. Rash Soother**

There are two things that come to mind when I think of discomfort caused by a rash of any kind-itching and painful swelling. Coconut oil, with its anti-inflammatory effects, is an obvious go-to for helping the swelling. It will also help take the edge off the dreadful itching, curbing the vicious cycle of scratching and further irritating your skin.

### **33. Cutting Board Conditioner**

I used to buy these little bottle of some fancy oil marketed specifically for conditioning cutting boards...never again! Wipe down the cutting board with a damp towel and then dry it. Use a soft cloth to rub in some coconut oil, and let it sit for 10-15 minutes. Buff with a fresh cloth. For a little extra odor removing kick, add a few drops of lemon essential oil (or even just a small squirt of lemon juice.)

### **34. Go-To Carrier/Base Oil**

Lotions, lip balms, massage blends, body butters, sugar scrubs...coconut oil is a great go-to carrier/base oil. Its texture and consistency helps hold whatever it is you've created together, while contributing all of its awesome moisturizing and healing benefits.

### **35. DIY Vapor Rub**

Mix peppermint essential oil with coconut oil to make a vapor rub that you can apply beneath your nose/on your chest when you're congested. It's a simple, but effective, way to clear out stuffiness and help you sleep better at night.

### **36. Prevent Lice**

I don't know why lice wouldn't like coconut oil, since it smells so dang good, but people have found it seems to keep them at bay, and even chase them away. If your little one comes home from school with lice, dip a fine toothed comb in coconut oil and run it through their hair. You can also use it as a precaution if there is an outbreak.

### **37. Frizz-Fighter**

In the deathly dryness of winter, or on steaming humid days, hair can get a little wild. If your mane has a mind of its own, put a \*small\* amount of coconut oil on your fingers and run them through your hair to get a handle on the frizz. I recommend sticking to mostly the ends if possible, as it can get a little heavy otherwise.

### **38. On Toast**

A simple way to replace butter. Spread some coconut oil on toast for a tasty (and filling) snack.

### **39. Popcorn Topping**

Melt some coconut oil and drizzle it over your popcorn. Add a touch of salt, toss until each piece is coated, and enjoy a magnificent show time snack.

### **40. Wound Care**

Antibacterial and antifungal properties make coconut oil an ideal salve for minor scrapes and scratches. Mix some up with a little bit of honey (also antibacterial) and apply a dab to the area, or just use on its own. Don't slather it onto a great big gaping cut, but for little stuff it's a great thing to have in your all-natural first aid kit.

### **41. Small Motor Lubricant**

Use a small amount of melted coconut oil to lubricate small motors, such as on blenders. A little goes a long way. Too much and it can have the opposite effect of running smoothly when it solidifies.



## **42. Reduce Hair Balls**

Strong anecdotal evidence supports using coconut oil to reduce hair balls. There are also those who feel medium-chain triglycerides aren't the way to go with our feline friends, so do some research to decide what you are comfortable with. Rub a little on your cat's paws to help improve digestive function and reduce hair balls.

## **43. Aromatherapy**

Add your favorite blend of essential oils to some coconut oil to dab on your temples and the back of your neck when you feel stressed or nauseous. Peppermint and eucalyptus for headaches and tension, or lemon/lime/orange for nausea, are nice places to start.

## **44. Summer Day Dog Treats**

Also known as "coconut cubes" these tasty chilled treats will help keep your pooch cool the glorious warm weather comes. Mix some peanut butter with coconut oil and freeze into an ice cube tray to feed as a special treat to your pups on hot summer days. Feed them outside or on a smooth floor to avoid getting your carpet messy!

## **45. Dry Nostrils**

Dry nostrils feel like they need to be picked at. Picked at nostrils become sore and irritated nostrils. It's a vicious cycle. Rub a little bit of coconut oil on the inside of each nostril to moisturize it. Use only a little bit. Because coconut oil melts rapidly at body temperature, too much can make you look (or feel) like you have a runny nose!

## **46. Cracked Paw Pads**

Doggy paws are tough, and they should be a little rough, calloused, and thickened. Imagine how tender they would get if they were soft and smooth! That being said, when your dog starts to get really dry, cracked paws, rub some coconut oil into them to help them heal. Don't overdo it though- your dog doesn't want its paw pads to be as silky smooth as your skin. The hardest part about this is keeping them from licking it off. Make sure to keep your canine away from delicate floors if you are worried it might stain (I have yet to have a problem with this on carpet or wood, but everybody's house is different!)

## **47. Constipation Relief**

Take a tablespoon of coconut oil every morning on an empty stomach to keep your digestive track running smoothly. You can try 2 tablespoons to work out acute constipation as well.

## **48. Fade Age/Sun Spots**

Coconut oil can help heal or lessen the appearance of a wide variety of skin blemishes, and people have found that daily application of it have helped fade sun or age spots. Rub coconut oil onto sun spots daily to help fade them.

## **49. Bags-Be-Gone**

Put the beauty back in beauty sleep and use coconut oil to help get rid of those dark circles that make you look so exhausted. Every night, rub a little bit of coconut oil under your eyes to reduce puffiness and dark bags in the morning.

## **50. Soften Dry Elbows**

Elbows are one of the hardest places to keep soft. Rub coconut oil onto them morning and night to help them stay supple. I don't suggest doing this if you are going in for a big test and plan on setting your elbows on the desk. The horror if they slipped off and you ended up banging yourself against the table in the middle of a dead silent room.

## **51. Give Your Dog a Healthy Shine**

Feed 2 teaspoons to dogs under 30 pounds and 1 tablespoon to dogs over 30 pounds daily to improve dry skin and give their coats a lustrous shine. Work up to the full dosage over the course of a week or so, discontinuing use if it seems to upset your canine companion's tummy.

## **52. Insect Repellent**

I can't imagine why bugs would find coconut oil repulsive but then, I also find some of the things they do rather distasteful myself. For whatever reason, some people find that slathering on coconut oil can help keep the bugs at bay. You can also try melting down the oil and stirring in some essential oils (such as peppermint or citrus) and then making a bug repellent bar of sorts that you can reapply.

## **53. Bee Sting Soother**

As a beekeeper, bee stings are a reality that I face quite often. While honeybees are really quite gentle creatures, some stings are simply inevitable at times. To help reduce the swelling, heat, and pain that comes along with bee venom, rub a little coconut oil onto the site after the stinger has been removed. For an extra soothing kick, add a drop of lavender essential oil to it as well.

## **54. Stop Sticky, Squeaky, Hinges**

It's hard to be subtle when you have a squeaky door. Your plans for a midnight raid of the snack cupboard will be thwarted if a door makes a racket when you open it. Rub a little coconut oil into the hinges to stop the squealing.

## **55. Metal Polish**

Rub a bit of coconut oil over metal with a soft cloth. Let it sit for a minute, and then buff to a shine. It's helpful to wipe the surface free of dust before applying the oil.

## **56. Moisten A Little One's Chapped Nose**

Youngsters seem to have a perpetually runny nose. That shiny upper lip that just won't go away. This can result in a very chapped little nose. To help clear up that sore spot, gently wipe away any goobers with a washcloth dipped in warm water. Pat the excess water off and rub a little bit of coconut oil onto the skin to moisturize and heal the area. The antibacterial/antifungal benefits can't hurt either!

## **57. Clean Your Retainer (or Mouth Guard)**

The antibacterial and antifungal constituents of coconut oil take center stage here. Rub a little bit of it onto your retainer after rinsing it at night to help keep it clean, and it doesn't taste so bad either. You can also use this on a mouth guard as well. If you're going to get tackled to the ground, you might as well have a pleasant taste in your mouth when you hit the dirt.

## **58. Give Plants a Shine**

The last thing your beautiful, green, healthy plants want is a waxy silicone shine that makes their leaves glisten unnaturally. Rub a tiny bit of coconut oil into them to keep leaves looking healthy and dust-free. Reapply every few days or as needed.

## **59. Use in Toothpaste**

Add flavor, antibacterial action, and potential whitening benefits by adding coconut oil to some baking soda and using as a DIY toothpaste. For a little extra flavor, mix in a drop or two of peppermint or cinnamon essential oil.

## **60. Ease Arthritis Pain**

Acute inflammation present with arthritis is responsible for quite a bit of discomfort and stiffness that accompanies this common malady, which can be eased by the anti-inflammatory effects of the coconut oil. Massage a bit of the oil into each joint thoroughly 1-2 times a day to relieve soreness.

## **61. Clean Your Dogs Ears**

Gently wipe surface dirt out of your dog's ears with a cotton ball. A dog's ear canal is shaped like an 'L' so don't panic too much about jabbing your finger or cotton swab in too far. This is why you'll see your vet take that super long cotton swab and stick it all the way into the ear for a sample. Afterwards you wipe it out, gently rub in some coconut oil into the skin to keep them healthy, itch-free, and comfortable.

## **62. Soothe a Dry Canine Nose**

Rub a tad onto your dog's nose if it is perpetually dry and cracked. This remedy is smooch-faced breed approved.

## **63. Treat Athletes Foot**

The anti-fungal action of coconut oil helps fight off athlete's foot when you apply it daily. Be sure to rinse your feet first and pat them dry, then thoroughly apply a thin layer of coconut oil, massaging it in well. Wash your hands before applying to the other foot to avoid spreading the fungus.

## **64. Say Goodbye to a Sore throat**

Can't ease that painful throat? Coconut oil provides a wonderful soothing coating, whether the discomfort is caused by dry air or an illness. Swallow ½-1 teaspoon up to 3 times daily to ease the pain, being sure to make one of those times right before bed. For an extra kick, melt the coconut oil down and stir in a little honey (its ok if it separates some.) When it is mostly room temp, mash up the mixture a little bit and use the same as above.

## **65. Lessen a Dry, Hacking, Cough**

You don't want to suppress your cough if it is productive, meaning you are coughing up phlegm. Your body needs to get rid of all that stuff. However, if you have a dry hacking cough, swallowing a teaspoon or so of coconut oil can help ease the itchy irritation. It is especially nice because it coats your throat and seems to protect it more from irritating things such as dust, whereas water only provides very temporary relief.

## **66. Prevent Stretch Marks**

There is no magic method to prevent or get rid of stretch marks. Indeed, how noticeably you get stretch marks are based a lot on genetics. They are caused by, literally, a stretching of the skin. This may occur during pregnancy, puberty, during rapid muscle mass gain, etc. and tend to be more extreme when there is an excess of cortisol (a stress hormone produced by the adrenal glands) involved. Cortisol damages elastic fibers in the dermis. Put simply, the marks appear when the lower layers of the dermis tear for some reason or another. Anecdotal evidence suggest that keeping skin moisturized and supple can help prevent stretch marks, and what better moisturizer than coconut oil? Rub some onto the area twice daily (for example, your belly if you are pregnant) and massage it in well. You can also melt down some cocoa butter with the coconut oil for an extra moisturizing boost.

## **67. Ink Cleaner**

Don't cry over spilled ink. If you find yourself with irritating ink smears and smudges on your hand, simply rub a little coconut oil over it and let it sit for a minute or two. Wipe off with a dry, clean, cloth.

## **68. Personal Lubricant \*not compatible with latex**

Yup, coconut oil can be used as a natural and effective alternative to store-bought lubricant. It is not compatible with latex though, as it causes it to lose its elasticity and break down, so do not use it with condoms. Coconut oil + condoms = baby! Otherwise, enjoy on your own or with a partner the same way you would any other kind.

## **69. Detail Your Car**

Coconut oil provides a lustrous sheen to the inside of your car, be it the dashboard or leather seats. You can also use it to buff out little scratches that might be marking up the paint job. The best part(s) are that it soaks in, lasts a while, doesn't attract dust, smells great, and is all natural.

## **70. Soothe and Prevent Hangnails**

Fun fact-hangnails are also known as a "stepmothers blessing" in several parts of the U.K. as well as a "catchy" in other parts of the world. Whatever you call them, these little bits of torn skin seem benign, but cause major pain. Often times they end up creating a whole inflamed sore patch around your nail that's tender for days. Rubbing some coconut oil around the outer edges of your nail can help keep the skin soft and pliable, making it less likely for it to "rip" and land you with a hangnail. When the little bits of skin get hard and stiff, rubbing some coconut oil on it will also help soothe the pain with its anti-inflammatory actions.

## **71. One Ingredient Udder Soother**

Cracked teats are, as one can imagine, terribly uncomfortable for the cow. Not only that, but it provides an area for bacteria and infection to multiply, which is the last thing you want to happen. Just like coconut oil provides wonderful soothing moisture in the form of nipple cream for humans, it makes an awesome one-ingredient udder balm. Simply apply as you would any other udder balm.

## **72. Detangler**

When you've got a nasty tangle, try using coconut oil to ease it out without any yanking, eye watering, or ripped out broken hairs. Dampen your hair well and then massage in coconut oil, letting it sit for 2-3 minutes. Starting at the bottom of the hair shaft, gently work your way up with a comb to get through the tangles .

## **73. Cracked Heels**

Cracked, dry, heels? As a super moisturizer, coconut oil can help soften and smooth over that skin. Use a pumice stone first to slough off any excess buildup of cells, and then get a little bit of coconut oil on your fingertips. Massage into your heels well, and let dry. Repeat twice daily.

## **74. Get Rid of Angular Chelitis (aka pesky little mouth sores)**

This sounds obscure, but it is a much more common occurrence than it seems. Angular chelitis is inflammation of the lips, technically, but often times appear as little "splits" or "cracks" in the corner of your mouth. When this happens, fungus can jump on the opportunity to infect the little area. Rub a little bit of coconut oil on the sore spots 2-3 times daily to keep yourself comfortable and to fight off fungi.

## **75. Use in the Sun**

Coconut oil in and of itself is not sufficient as sunscreen. On its own, it has an SPF (sun protection factor) of 4-6. This helps a little, but not enough to make it a substitute. That being said, try applying coconut oil in between re-applications of sunscreen. It will help hydrate your skin and prevent it from drying out. Should you get burned, it can also help prevent peeling and itching.

## **76. Improve Circulation**

We need proper circulation to not only function, but to heal as well. Not to mention feeling cold all the time (or having people shudder at your frigid touch) isn't fun. Coconut oil, taken internally, may help improve blood flow. As it can raise the levels of HDL-or "good"-cholesterol, the ratio between HDL and LDL-"bad" cholesterol-are evened. Since LDL cholesterol can affect the viscosity of blood, and "thicken" it, lower levels lead to thinner blood which leads to better circulation. Start with a ½ tablespoon a day and work up to 1 tablespoon to give your circulation an energy boost.

## **77. Add to Baby Bath**

Babies have wonderfully soft, smooth, healthy skin-and we want to keep it that way! Try adding a little bit of coconut oil to your little one's bath to help keep skin soft and smooth. It will also help soothe any little rashes, scrapes, or bothersome bug bites that may be bothering them.



## **78. Get Rid of Cradle Cap**

Cradle cap is typically a harmless condition that results in patches of yellowish, thick, sometimes greasy scales on your baby's head (although it can occasionally be found on other areas of the body as well.) Like true adult dandruff, there could be several causes of cradle cap, including an overgrowth of yeast or over productive oil glands. To help loosen and remove the crusty flaking scales, dampen little one's hair/scalp and gently apply enough coconut oil to cover the affected area-it doesn't need to be thick. Leave it on for 15 minutes (or longer if needed) to soften the scales. Then use a soft bristled baby brush or very fine toothed comb to loosen and remove the patches. Follow up by rinsing with a regular mild baby shampoo to remove the rest of the oil from the hair.

## **79. Breath Freshener**

Make somebody feel like they're lounging in the tropics when they get close to your face. If you suffer from bad breath, kick the problem with coconut oil by holding a teaspoon or so in your mouth until it melts, swishing it around a bit, and then either swallowing or spitting it into the trash. The antibacterial properties in coconut oil make it useful for ridding your mouth of odor causing bacteria

## **80. Flaky Scalp Treatment**

Different from dandruff, having a flaky or dry scalp simply results in those annoying snowy white flakes that you can seem to get rid of. With its super moisturizing prowess, coconut oil can help provide nourishing moisture to a thirsty scalp. Wet your hair, and then massage coconut oil over scalp, using just enough to cover the area. Let it sit for 10-15 minutes, and then rinse it out. Follow up with a small amount of very mild shampoo to ensure a non-greasy look when finished. Repeat this at least 3 times a week, or as needed, to prevent dry scalp.

## **81. Reduce Fine Lines**

There are two main things that keep the skin supple but firm, collagen and elastin. Collagen is what gives skin it's "firmness" while elastin is what allows it to stretch and then return to its original shape. Collagen production slows as we age, which is part of why wrinkles start to appear, and elastin production is stopped completely-hence your skin no longer snaps back into place if you pinch it. Coconut oil's biologically active components (such as certain fatty acids) have been shown to increase collagen cross-linking, which is part of why it helps wounds heal faster. This same principle may be why it helps reduce fine lines/wrinkles. Apply twice daily, using as little amount as possible and rubbing in thoroughly, to reduce the appearance of fine lines.

## **82. Prevent Split Ends**

The fatty acids in coconut oil do more than just make hair look smooth and healthy for the present, it can keep it looking that way by preventing pesky split ends. Rich in protective fatty acids that easily adhere to keratin, the main protein in hair, a little bit of coconut oil applied to the ends of your hair daily can help reduce breakage. Be sure to apply just a little and only to the ends, especially if you are prone to oily hair.

### **83. Fight Ringworm**

Ringworm, despite sounding like a parasite, really falls under the same category as athlete's foot, a related skin infection, caused by one of several types of mold-like fungi that feed on the dead tissue in nails, skin, and hair. Ringworm typically presents itself as a red scaly or slightly raised bump. It will generally begin to look like a ring-hence the name- that has scaly edges. Itchy and uncomfortable, it's not fun to have hanging around. Washing your hands before and after application, rinse the affected area with water and pat dry before rubbing in a small amount of coconut oil up to 3 times a day.

### **84. Ease Osteoporosis**

Coconut oil can help ease osteoarthritis in a number of ways. Trabecular bone is one of two types of bone structure-it is "spongy" and has a higher surface area to mass ratio. It is typically the most harshly affected type of bone in osteoporosis. The trabecular number refers to measure of bone texture and structure, and marks the risk/severity of osteoporosis. Unlike plain calcium therapy, which reduced trabecular separation, coconut oil increased bone volume and the trabecular number in studies conducted with rats. Rats are good subjects to study when it comes to bone disease, as the remodeling and resorption process in rats is similar to that of humans. Osteoporosis caused by oxidative stress may also be lessened due to the potential anti-oxidant effects of coconut oil, while coconut oil also helps the absorption of calcium.

### **85. Help Heal a Bruise**

A bruise is caused by some sort of impact or trauma rupturing blood vessels beneath the surface of the skin. Coconut oil may help speed the healing of tissue when used externally, even taken internally, and can help repair tissue damage and reduce the time that it would normally take your bruise to heal and fade.

### **86. Food Poisoning Relief**

Bacteria and germs have become more prevalent-and harder to wipe out-every year. Even just E. coli has surged with the forms of packaging, preparation, and shipping that we use in the modern world. So what does one do when crippled in bed or chained to the porcelain throne? Take 2-3 tablespoons of coconut oil with orange juice every day. With its antiviral, antimicrobial actions that can defeat even the most stubborn illnesses that you would have to suffer through, it is (almost) a literal life saver.

### **87. Tattoo Moisturizer/Healer**

The feeling after you get new ink is beyond amazing, and you want to do everything you can to help your tattoo heal and stay healthy. Often time's thick petroleum jelly is applied to keep the tattoo moist, but that can get gummy quickly, and can sometimes feel like you're suffocating your skin rather than helping it heal. Instead use coconut oil to facilitate healing and keep the area moisturized (but not drowning.) As much as you love it, your tattoo is technically a wound, and your body will treat it as it would any other trauma. This includes that maddening itch, which coconut oil happens to soothe quite well. It is much less smothering, and more natural, than many other products, and keeps your skin moisturized, smooth, and healthy-and your new tattoo radiant. For the period that you would usually use jelly, apply coconut oil instead. You can be generous here, but remember that it melts quickly and can get runny, so applying smaller amounts at a time is useful.

## **88. Homemade Teething “Gel”**

Teething occurs (typically) between six and nine months of age, and does not actually involve the teeth cutting through the gums. Rather certain chemicals are released that cause some cells in the gum tissue to selectively die off, which results in the gums separating and allowing the teeth to come through. Coconut oil can help tame some of the irritation and inflammation that tends to come along with the process of teething. Simply rub a little over the gums with your finger. To add an extra pain killing kick, add cloves to the mix. Naturally containing eugenol, a painkilling substance still used today, cloves can help ease teething woes. Some people use clove essential oil, but I don't use essential oils directly with babies or very young children. Instead, add 2 teaspoons (up to 1 tablespoon for the maximum dosage) of whole cloves to ¼-1/2 cup of coconut oil and let it sit over low heat for 1 hour. There is no need to remove the solids, since you can scoop the oil out around them, but any botanical matter will shorten shelf life.

## **89. Remove Rust**

Rust is somewhat of an inevitable fact of life. Unless you can keep your scissors/knives/etc. away from oxygen, you're going to encounter rust eventually. To get rid of these pesky spots, spread a thin layer of coconut oil over the rusty area. Let it sit for 1-2 hours, then run warm water over the oil and wipe clean with a soft cloth.

## **90. Tupperware Stain Prevention**

When it comes to dishware malfunctions, Tupperware stains are pretty bothersome, especially when stained with red sauce. It isn't exactly appetizing to place fresh food in a clean, but very dirty looking, container. To help prevent these stains, rub a very thin layer of coconut oil into the Tupperware and allow it to sink in/dry. This forms a layer that prevents discoloration from setting in. At times this can even help with clean up, as things slide out easier. If you are worried about coconut flavor/taste being imparted, use refined coconut oil.

## **91. Dust Repellant**

A thin layer of coconut oil rubbed into certain surfaces (such as wood, or a dashboard) can help keep dust from collecting. It seems counterintuitive, like the dust would just stick in the coconut oil and make it all fuzzy, but it doesn't. Instead you get a nice lustrous polished look and you keep the dust bunnies at bay. Rub a small amount over the desired area, being sure to rub it in thoroughly, and then allow it to dry. Use ONLY enough as needed. Be sure to test on a small area first to make sure it does not discolor or in any way negatively affect the surface.

## **92. Slick Your Snow Shovel**

Clearing heavy, wet, clumping snow can be backbreaking work, especially when it clings to your shovel, building up and weighing it down. To keep the snow sliding effortlessly off your shovel, rub a thin layer of coconut oil over it. Reapply as needed-usually 1-2 times a week, depending on how often you're shoveling. If you have a toasty heated garage, keep the shovel some place cooler to prevent the oil layer from simply melting off.

### **93. Clean Sap**

I grew up trying to climb the old pine tree in my backyard which, naturally, got me covered in sap. It was my Dad who first showed me that mayonnaise could magically get that pesky sticky sap off your hands, and it only made sense when I learned that coconut oil could do the same. I am not sure why, but rubbing the sappy spot with coconut oil and then rinsing with warm soapy water does wonders!

### **94. Unstick a Zipper**

It's a problem when you can't get your pants zipper up before an important meeting, nor is it fun being stuck yanking on your toddler's stubborn jacket zipper while they look at you like "aren't you supposed to be able to solve all the problems in the world? What's taking you so long?" Avoid both of these unfortunate situations- apply a bit of coconut oil on the jammed zipper, rub it in a bit, and it should glide with ease.

### **95. Grease a Bicycle Chain**

If you want to try "green grease" try a little bit of coconut oil on your bike chain to keep it running smoothly. A thick layer is not needed, as coconut oil solidifies temperatures under 76 degrees Fahrenheit, and you don't want to gum up your chain.

### **96. Shape Your Beard/'Stache**

If you're going to for a sleek, styled look, use a little bit of coconut oil to shape your beard or mustache into your desired look.

### **97. Cheekbone Highlighter**

Highlighting your cheeks gives you that little extra glow that people can't quite place, but definitely notice. Apply a small amount of coconut oil the same as you would another cheekbone cream to give yourself a naturally beautiful glow.

### **98. After Wax Moisturizer**

Since it works so well to moisturize after shaving, it only makes sense that applying coconut oil after waxing would help prevent those pesky bumps and potentially ingrown hairs.

### **99. Preserve Eggs**

Paint a thin coating of coconut oil over the eggshell to preserve quality and extend shelf-life. The oil prevents degradation from exposure to oxygen, and studies have found that the oil coating maintained an AA grade up to 3 weeks after storage, as opposed to when a glycerol coating was used. The grade refers to the Haugh unit, which measures the quality of the egg protein in the white.

### **100. Maintain Lawn Mower Blades**

Apply a thin layer of coconut oil over clean lawn mower blades to prevent grass clumps from sticking and jamming the mower.

### **101. Grease Baking Pans**

There's nothing like slaving over a beautiful baked good and then watching it crumble as you try to take it out of the pan. Avoid this heartbreak by greasing pans lightly with coconut oil first.

### **102. Clean Makeup Brushes**

Preserve your delicate make up brushes by cleaning them with coconut oil. Simply melt down some of the oil in a glass and dip the brush into the liquid, coating it thoroughly. Then gently swirl the brush on a paper towel or wash cloth until the color or product is gone. Rinse under warm water, and dry. Any bit of residue tends to make the bristles quite soft, but you can also use a mild soap and water to remove it if you find it bothersome.

### **103. Eyelash Enhancement**

Long thick eyelashes are something many people desire, but that doesn't mean they're easy to come by. To get those luscious upturned 'lashes, apply a little bit of coconut oil to your eyelashes nightly. The proteins can help encourage growth and seal in moisture, preventing brittleness and breakage.

### **104. Lubricate Kitchen Appliances**

Rub a thin layer over the blades of kitchen appliances to keep them running smoothly. Be sure to store in a cool place so the layer stays firm.

### **105. Mane & Tail Conditioner**

Like you, horses can benefit from coconut oil as well. A thick, healthy, flowing mane and tail are wonderful to behold but for those with horses, well, we know it's not always an easy thing to achieve that look. They get dirty, rubbed out, and downright ratty looking. Coconut oil can help get you closer to that luxurious tail, but things will get worse before they get better. Clean the tail/mane thoroughly and run in a very liberal amount of coconut oil. It will look greasy and, quite frankly, unappealing. Do this for 5-7 days, and then rinse clean with shampoo. Prepare for a shiny, silken, soft mane and tail. It can also help ease irritation from things like sweet itch that may cause your horse to rub.

### **106. Target Eczema and Psoriasis**

Eczema and psoriasis, while not the same thing, are both generally red, irritated, often times chronic skin diseases, and both are uncomfortable. Use coconut oil to target patches of your body that are being affected, and rub on a thin layer to keep the area moisturized and healthy, while also fighting off fungus or bacteria that could set in as a secondary infection if you've been scratching.

### **107. Reduce Dandruff**

If you suffer from true dandruff (as opposed to just dry scalp) it is possible that you have an overgrowth of a common fungus on the scalp. Use coconut oil 2-3 times a week to provide some anti-fungal action to help keep the itching and flakes at bay.