

A Coconut A Day Keeps The Dentist Away?

By Amy Alkon

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Well, not quite a coconut, but there's been a promising finding about coconut oil. From the BBC, the news that enzyme-treated coconut oil attacks the bacteria behind tooth decay, and could be used in dental care products:

Scientists found that coconut oil which had been treated with enzymes stopped the growth of Streptococcus bacteria – a major cause of tooth decay.

Tooth decay affects 60% to 90% of children in industrialised countries.

Speaking at the Society for General Microbiology's conference, the Irish researchers say that coconut oil also attacks the yeast which causes thrush.

The research team from the Athlone Institute of Technology in Ireland tested the impact of coconut oil, vegetable oil and olive oil in their natural states and when treated with enzymes, in a process similar to digestion.

The oils were then tested against Streptococcus bacteria which are common inhabitants of the mouth.

Only the enzyme-modified coconut oil showed an ability to inhibit the growth of most strains of the bacteria.

It also attacked Streptococcus mutans, an acid-producing bacterium which is a major cause of tooth decay.