HEALTHY FOOD

Is Corn Oil a Healthy Diet Option? (Less Expensive than Sunflower Oil)

By bestfolkmedicine · 14/04/2022 · 4 min read



Corn oil is a type of veggie, refined oil that's popularly used in cooking and deep-frying. This oil is commonly applied elsewhere. For example, for industrial reasons or for cosmetics.

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In order to get corn oil, corn is put through a complex process of refining. This process creates one-of-a-kind properties in corn oil, but not all of them are beneficial.

Though it has various culinary uses, it's most popular as a frying oil. Its smoke point is around 450 degrees F so it's commonly used for deep frying and enables the crispiness of foods without burning them.

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You can find it in local stores and you can use it for marinades, sauteing, frying, salad dressings, baked goods, etc.

How Is Corn Oil Made?

Since it has a content of fat of around 1 to 4 percent, corn isn't a naturally oily food. So, it goes through a process of oil extraction.

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First, the kernels are pressed mechanically and the oil is extracted. Then, this oil undergoes several chemical processes that eliminate impurities and unpleasant tastes and odors.

It also undergoes processes that eliminate a lot of vitamins and minerals from it and may also include unhealthy substances.

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One is hexane extraction. The corn is washed with a hexane chemical solution that encourages the release of oil. Hexane is found to be harmful to the nervous system of both humans and animals.

The others are deodorization and winterization. The former removes unpleasant tastes and smells from the oil, but also several healthy compounds.

The latter eliminates the solid fats and waxes from the oil so that it can remain liquid at lower temperatures. Without this process, many veggie oils would go solid in cold temperatures.

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Possible Benefits of Consuming Corn Oil

- **Abundant in phytosterols**

These plant-based compounds have a similar structure to the cholesterol in animals. They may be anti-inflammatory and consuming foods with anti-inflammatory properties may lower one's risk of

health issues like type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular illnesses, and even cancer.

This oil has a higher amount of phytosterols when combined with other cooking oils like canola, peanut, and olive. The highest is the phytosterol beta-sitosterol.

This one has been found to possess anti-tumor properties and in one study, it lowered the growth of lung cancer cells without affecting the healthy ones.

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- **It may be good for the cardiovascular health**

Since it contains vitamin E, phytosterols, and linoleic acid, corn oil may provide benefits to the heart by lowering the risk of cardiovascular illness.

Vitamin E is a potent antioxidant so following a diet that's abundant in it may lower the risk of oxidative heart and blood vessel damage caused by surplus free radicals.

Some studies indicate that corn oil may play a role in lowering bad cholesterol, probably because of the phytosterols.

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However, most of these studies are funded by ACH Food Companies Inc. the producer of the Mazola corn oil. Most of these health studies' results are designed in favor of the products of the company.

The Negative Health Effects of Corn Oil

- **Made with GMO corn**

Most corn oil is made using GMO corn.

And, according to data from 2010, around 90 percent of the corn in the US was GMO. GMO corn is modified to be resistant to weed killers and insects.

Glyphosate buildup from consuming glyphosate-resistant GMO foods is also a concern and glyphosate was classified as a possible carcinogenic in 2015 by the WHO.

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But, most available animal and in-tube results don't support these claims.

- **Very refined**

This highly processed oil increases the risk of oxidation or loss of electrons at a molecular level and becoming unstable.

High amounts of oxidized compounds in the body can elevate one's risk of some illnesses.

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- **Contains a lot of omega 6 fats**

Corn oil contains linoleic acid, an omega 6 fat that has been associated with some health benefits; however, it may be dangerous when consumed excessively.

The recommended ratio for a healthy body between omega 6 and omega 3 is 4:1.

Most people consume a 20:1 ratio and eat more omega 6 fats than the omega 3s.

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This imbalance results in obesity, depression, and heart illnesses.

The balance between the two is pivotal because omega 6 tends to encourage inflammation, especially when the amount of omega 3s is low.

Corn oil has a ratio of omega 6 to omega 3 of 46:1.

Reducing the consumption of this food and others rich in omega 6s while increasing the consumption of foods abundant in omega 3s like chia seeds and fatty fish may lower the inflammation and better the overall health.

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Sources:

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