

# Health Benefits of Palm Oil

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## ABSTRACT

In recent times there has been a growing research interest in palm oil, one of the major edible plant oils in the tropical countries because of its various uses and nutritional value. Palm oil is a semi solid oil which contains approximately 44% palmitic and 5% stearic acids. In the past, palm oil was attacked as saturated fat, and thereby allegedly raises blood cholesterol and increases the risk of cardiovascular disease. However, many studies have proved that palm oil give a health benefits because it contains a high amount of tocopherols and tocotrienols. It also considered to be the richest natural source of carotenoids, phytosterols and squalene. These bioactive phytochemicals are very useful agent in the prevention and /or treatment of some diseases. This paper therefore attempts to review the health effects of palm oil considering recently available information.

Keywords: Palm oil, health, phytochemicals, diseases

## INTRODUCTION

Since 1980, palm oil production has increased tenfold with estimates that production will increase 50% by 2050. Indonesia is the largest producer of palm oil, followed by Malaysia which both countries account for 84% of the worlds palm production. This make Malaysia is the second in the producing and exporting palm oil in the world after Indonesia. Palm oil has been used in food preparation for many years. In the meantime, palm oil is also used in personal care and cosmetics, biofuel and energy, animal feed and also in pharmaceutical industry.

A World Health Organization (WHO, 2003) report stated that palmitic oil consumption contributes to an increased risk of developing of cardiovascular disease. Palm oil was also is stated as saturated fat that can raise blood cholesterol and increase the risk of cardiovascular disease. However, scientific evidence indicates that palm oil's effect blood cholesterol as relatively normal compared to other fats and oil (Giri, & Bhatia, 2020; Vazquez-Vidal & Jones, 2020).

Therefore, the effects and advantages of palm oil on human health are summarized in this poster.

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## FINDINGS

- ➔ Red palm oil is said to improve diabetic conditions (Giri, & Bhatia, 2020).
- ➔ Caratenoids in palm oil play role by protecting cells and tissue in body from free radicals damage (Noami et al., 2021; Ghani et al., 2019).
- ➔ Help in preventing skin aging (Plyduang et al., 2022).
- ➔ Prevent blockage of carotid artery and therefore reduce the risk of stroke, arteriosclerosis and heart disease (Giri, & Bhatia, 2020).
- ➔ Protect brain from oxidative damage (Noami et al., 2021; Ghani et al., 2019).
- ➔ Natural antioxidant that play as a protective role against arthritis, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases (Noami et al., 2021; Ghani et al., 2019).
- ➔ Tocotrienols by its action on liver enzymes lowers blood cholesterol levels without reduction in good cholesterol (HDL) (Giri, & Bhatia, 2020; Vazquez-Vidal & Jones, 2020).
- ➔ Caratenoids in palm oil can reduce the risk of cancer and prevent singlet oxygen (Giri & Bhatia, 2020).
- ➔ Tocotrienols acts as natural inhibitors of cholesterol synthesis (Vazquez-Vidal & Jones, 2020).
- ➔ The tocopherols and tocotrienols promote an antithrombotic state by reducing platelet aggregation and modulating prostanoid synthesis (Noami et al., 2021; Ghani et al., 2019).
- ➔ Vitamin A in red palm oil is needed for normal development, growth and also help in visual process of eye (Cassiday, 2017).
- ➔ Red palm oil has also been found to improve the vitamin A status of nursing mothers and to increase the carotene content of their breastmilk (Keisha et al., 2022).