Nutrition Bites

Coconut Milk: Why We Use It

Coconut milk is a staple of Eastern and South American cultures, where coconuts are widely available, and its benefits well-known. It is high in (healthy) saturated fatty acids and medium-chain triglycerides (MCT), which are both easily burned as fuel by the body. MCTs are particularly beneficial in that they don’t require bile acids for digestion, and they’re directly shunted to the liver via the portal vein¹. Coconut milk adds body to many dishes and a distinct flavor and can be substituted for part of the water when making brown rice for a delicious creamy rice. Using coconut milk in smoothies is a great way to substitute dairy and make a great breakfast choice – especially in the summer.

Coconut milk is simple to make and contains an abundance of nutrients:

✓ Vitamins C and E help boost the immune system
✓ B vitamins provide energy to the cells
✓ Magnesium, nature’s muscle & vein relaxer, regulates heart rhythm, and can prevent stroke and heart attack
✓ Potassium supports function of nerve cells, prevents muscle contractions, and maintains fluid balance in the body
✓ Lauric acid has many germ-fighting, anti-fungal and anti-viral properties
✓ Antioxidants can boost immunity while rebuilding damaged cells in the body

¹ Chris Kresser <http://chriskresser.com>

This Week’s Recipe

Coconut Masala with Vegetables

Makes 5 servings | Prep time: 30 mins | Cooking time: 30 minutes

1 Tbs olive oil
1 cups chopped onion
1 Tbs minced garlic
1 tsp garam masala
1 tsp curry powder
1 tsp ground coriander
3/4 tsp turmeric
1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
3/4 tsp sea salt
3/4 Tbs fresh lemon juice
14 ounces diced tomatoes in juice
3 cups cauliflower florets
2 cups peeled and cubed yams
3 cups green beans, trimmed and cut in half
1/2 13 ounce can coconut milk
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
2 Tbs chopped green onion tops (green part)

1 Heat coconut oil in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onions; sauté until deep golden, about 20 minutes. Add garlic and all spices and salt; stir 1 minute. Cool to lukewarm.

2 Put tomatoes in a large pot, and using an immersion blender, puree with juice (or use a blender or food processor). Add the onion mixture; puree until almost smooth. Season mixture (masala) to taste with salt and pepper. Add coconut milk, lemon juice and half of the green onions and cilantro. Stir.

3 Blanch each of the vegetables separately just until cooked through.

4 Add the vegetables to the masala. Serve over steamed brown rice and garnish with remaining green onions and cilantro.