



## HEALTH BENEFITS OF EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

“Published research shows that no other food comes close to Extra Virgin olive oil for the prevention and treatment of chronic disease.”

Associate Professor Mary Flynn, Brown University

### What is Extra Virgin Olive Oil?

- Extra Virgin olive oil is the fresh healthy juice that is squeezed directly from the olive fruit. The better the quality of the olive fruit, and faster the juice is squeezed, the higher the quality of the oil produced.
- Extra Virgin olive oil is 100% natural – it is not refined or extracted using any chemicals or heat, leaving it high in natural antioxidants and healthy fats.
- The higher the quality of Extra Virgin olive oil, the healthier and tastier it is.
- It is important to note that oils which are not classified as Extra Virgin olive oil (such as olive refined blends, light olive oil) are usually extracted using chemicals and heat. These oils do not have the same health benefits and flavour as Extra Virgin olive oil.

### Tips for choosing high quality Extra Virgin Olive Oil?

- Ensure it is clearly labelled with “Extra Virgin” – any other name isn’t the real deal.
- Freshly bottled and first cold pressed is better.
- Locally grown Australian oil is often fresher than imported, as the oils don’t have to travel across the equator to reach your homes and can be freshly packed before arriving at your local store. Choose a fresher, higher quality Australian grown product.
- Choose an Extra Virgin olive oil which is produced by a company who selects the finest olives, picked at the perfect time to ensure they are full of health benefits. An oil which has been cold pressed within 4–6 hours of harvesting the olives will be a premium quality product.
- Olive oil is best used within 12–14 months from the time of harvest. Australian olive oils are harvested between March and June each year. Look for the harvest date on the front or side of pack to ensure you are buying the freshest and healthiest oil.
- Once opened, use the oil within 4–6 weeks to ensure the oil has the best flavour and health benefits.

- To check your oil is certified for meeting the Extra Virgin grade requirements, look for the Australian Olive Association symbol on pack:



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## HEALTH BENEFITS OF EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL



# WHY IS EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL GOOD FOR HEALTH?

## Heart Health



- Extra Virgin olive oil contains high levels of natural antioxidants.
- Antioxidants help protect the body from damage, and help to:
  - Increase the amount of good cholesterol in the body, and reduce the amount of bad cholesterol.
  - Reduce the risk of developing stiff or blocked arteries (which can cause heart problems).
  - Reduce blood pressure.
- Extra Virgin olive oil does not contain trans fats – which are fats that can be damaging to your heart health.
- Unlike refined cooking oils, Extra Virgin olive oil contains a unique mix of heart healthy fats and antioxidants. Including Extra Virgin olive oil in a Mediterranean style diet has a positive effect on your heart health.

## Weight Control



- For many years, people in some European countries have followed a Mediterranean diet (i.e. nuts, fruits, vegetables, legumes, wholegrains, fish), where Extra Virgin olive oil is the main source of fat.
- Evidence shows that people who consume a Mediterranean style diet usually have a lower body weight and are able to maintain it for longer.
- Extra Virgin olive oil also naturally helps you feel more satisfied/full after meals, which may help with the amount of food you eat, and help you manage weight more effectively.

## Anti-ageing



- Extra Virgin olive oil contains high levels of natural antioxidants such as vitamin E, which can help prevent cell damage caused by free radicals.
- Antioxidants help protect the body from damage and slow down the internal ageing processes.
- Chemical processing used in seed oil production, strips away all the natural antioxidants. As Extra Virgin olive oil is only cold pressed, it maintains its natural goodness.

## Anti-inflammatory



- Extra Virgin olive oil is the only cooking oil which contains oleocanthal, a natural anti-inflammatory compound that works in a similar way to ibuprofen.
- Including Extra Virgin olive oil in your Mediterranean style diet (at least 2–3 tablespoons per day) can help with inflammation in your body.

\* Note that oleocanthal has a similar effect as ibuprofen, but is not intended to replace therapeutic doses.

### A high quality Extra Virgin olive oil is:

- Very high in natural levels of antioxidants.
- Very high in levels of good (monounsaturated) fat.
- Does not contain any bad (trans) fats.



## ANTIOXIDANTS IN COOKING OIL

Based on analysis performed on standard supermarket products by ISO 17025 accredited laboratory.



## Can I cook with Extra Virgin Olive Oil?

Yes. In fact Extra Virgin olive oil is ideal for all types of cooking at home for three reasons:

1. Extra Virgin olive oil contains high levels of antioxidants which keep the oil very stable during the cooking process.
2. High quality Extra Virgin olive oil has a smoke point between 200 and 215°C, which is above that of standard home cooking temperatures for hot and cold cooking (e.g. sauté 160°C, deep fry 180°C, oven baking < 200°C). Whilst other oils may have higher smoke points, you only need to choose an oil with a smoke point above your cooking temperature.
3. When you sauté or roast some vegetables in high quality Extra Virgin olive oil you get more nutrients. Not to mention, vegetables taste better and you will want to eat more of them!