

NATURAL
NUTRITION
RESEARCH SERIES



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A STORY OF THE HEART™

OLIVE OIL & AVOCADO OIL

What the evidence actually shows.

THREE PART SERIES

PART 1

EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

The Established Story

PART 2

AVOCADO OIL

The Emerging Story

PART 3

OLIVE OIL vs AVOCADO OIL

Similar Fats. Different Evidence.



GOOD NUTRITION DOESN'T REQUIRE EXAGGERATION.
FOLLOW THE NUTRIENTS. FOLLOW THE RESEARCH. KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.

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THE HEART DOESN'T FOLLOW FOOD TRENDS.
IT RESPONDS TO PATTERNS.

Stabilitas Ante Luciditatem — Stability Before Clarity.



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A STORY OF THE HEART™

OLIVE OIL & AVOCADO OIL

What the evidence actually shows.

EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL: THE ESTABLISHED STORY

Extra-virgin olive oil (EVOO) is often described simply as a source of “healthy fat.” That is true — but incomplete.

Its cardiovascular story is supported not only by its high proportion of monounsaturated fat, but also by polyphenols, Mediterranean-diet research and substantial human clinical evidence.

The evidence is strongest for EVOO as part of an overall dietary pattern — not as an isolated miracle ingredient.



KEY POINT

The evidence for extra-virgin olive oil is not simply that it contains “good fat.”

It is supported by decades of human research examining cardiovascular risk factors, vascular biology and major cardiovascular outcomes.

Extra-virgin olive oil has one of the strongest cardiovascular evidence bases in all of nutrition science.



THE FAT PROFILE

Rich in oleic acid, a monounsaturated fatty acid. Replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats can help improve the overall fatty-acid profile of the diet.

EVOO also retains natural polyphenols. EFSA has concluded that olive-oil polyphenols can help protect LDL particles from oxidative damage when sufficient quantities are consumed.¹



THE MEDITERRANEAN CONNECTION

In the landmark PREDIMED trial, people at high cardiovascular risk assigned to a Mediterranean diet supplemented with extra-virgin olive oil experienced fewer major cardiovascular events than those assigned to a reduced-fat control diet.²



BLOOD PRESSURE

Mediterranean diets containing EVOO have been shown to reduce systolic and diastolic blood pressure in high-risk individuals.³

Higher-polyphenol EVOO has also been associated with improved vascular responses in human intervention studies.⁴



BLOOD LIPIDS

Research has examined LDL cholesterol, HDL function, oxidation and other lipid-related markers. Mediterranean-diet interventions with EVOO have reported favourable changes in LDL cholesterol and related cardiovascular risk markers.³



INFLAMMATION

Polyphenol-rich Mediterranean diets have been associated with reduced inflammatory markers such as CRP, IL-6 and others relevant to cardiovascular health.⁵



VASCULAR FUNCTION

EVOO and its polyphenols can improve endothelial function — the health of the inner lining of blood vessels — a key factor in cardiovascular wellbeing.^{4,5}

WHAT MAKES THE EVIDENCE DIFFERENT?

Extra-virgin olive oil has a depth and breadth of research that few foods can match:

- Randomised human trials
- Long-term Mediterranean-diet studies
- Cardiovascular-event data
- Blood-pressure research
- Lipid research
- Endothelial-function research
- Mechanistic evidence involving polyphenols

That breadth is why EVOO occupies a different scientific position from many oils promoted primarily on the basis of their nutrient composition.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Extra-virgin olive oil is not heart medicine. Nor does adding olive oil to an otherwise poor diet automatically create cardiovascular health.

The strongest evidence points toward something more important: dietary pattern.



Vegetables
Fruit



Legumes
Whole grains



Nuts
Seeds



Fish
Lean proteins



Unsaturated
fats (EVOO)

And within that pattern, extra-virgin olive oil has one of the most established research stories.

THE HEART
DOESN'T FOLLOW
FOOD TRENDS.
IT RESPONDS
TO PATTERNS.

Choose the oil.
Consider the diet.
Follow the evidence.



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THE MIND DOESN'T OPERATE SEPARATELY FROM THE BODY.
NUTRITION IS PART OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH IT OPERATES.
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A STORY OF THE HEART™ AVOCADO OIL THE EMERGING STORY

*Nutritious. Versatile. Promising.
But what does the cardiovascular evidence actually show?*

Avocado oil has rapidly developed a reputation as a heart-healthy oil. There are good nutritional reasons for that reputation.

Like olive oil, avocado oil is rich in monounsaturated fat, particularly oleic acid. It also contains naturally occurring compounds including vitamin E, carotenoids and phytosterols.

But there is an important scientific distinction:

A promising nutritional profile is not the same as an established clinical evidence base.



KEY POINT

Avocado oil is a nutritious choice.

But nutritious does not automatically mean extensively proven.

Its cardiovascular story is promising — and still being written.



THE FAT PROFILE

Avocado oil consists predominantly of monounsaturated fatty acids, with oleic acid generally representing its major fatty acid.

Replacing foods high in saturated fat with sources of unsaturated fat can contribute to a healthier overall dietary fat profile.

This gives avocado oil a sound nutritional foundation.

But fatty-acid composition tells us what an oil contains. It does not, by itself, tell us the magnitude of its effect on cardiovascular outcomes.



BEYOND MONOUNSATURATED FAT

Avocado oil can also contain several potentially interesting bioactive components, including:

- Vitamin E • Phytosterols • Carotenoids
- Chlorophylls • Phenolic compounds

Their concentrations vary considerably depending upon the avocado variety, extraction process, refinement and storage.

Unrefined or virgin avocado oils may retain more of some of these compounds than highly refined oils.



WHAT DOES THE HUMAN RESEARCH SHOW?

There is extensive research on avocados as a whole food, including studies examining blood lipids and cardiovascular risk factors.

There is considerably less human research examining avocado oil itself.

Small studies and nutritional research suggest that replacing more saturated sources of fat with oils rich in unsaturated fats can improve aspects of the blood-lipid profile.

But that does not establish avocado oil as uniquely cardioprotective.

The direct clinical evidence remains developing.



BLOOD LIPIDS

Because avocado oil is rich in unsaturated fat, using it instead of fats higher in saturated fatty acids can be consistent with cardiovascular dietary recommendations.

But we need to distinguish between:

- Evidence about unsaturated fats generally
- Evidence about whole avocados
- Evidence specifically about avocado oil.

They are related — but they are not interchangeable.



HEAT & CULINARY USE

Avocado oil is valued for more than its nutritional composition.

Refined avocado oil generally has a relatively high smoke point and neutral flavour, making it useful for higher-temperature cooking.

Virgin avocado oil has a more distinctive flavour and retains more of the characteristics of the fruit.

That versatility can make avocado oil a practical way of replacing fats higher in saturated fat within everyday cooking.



WHAT WE STILL NEED TO KNOW

Compared with extra-virgin olive oil, we have fewer long-term human trials examining avocado oil and:

- Cardiovascular events
- Endothelial function
- Blood pressure
- Long-term cholesterol outcomes
- Inflammatory markers

That doesn't mean avocado oil lacks cardiovascular value. It means the certainty of the evidence is different.



THE BIGGER PICTURE

Nutrition science should distinguish between plausibility and proof.

Avocado oil has a favourable fatty-acid composition.

It contains potentially beneficial plant compounds.

And it can be a useful substitute for fats richer in saturated fatty acids. Those are legitimate reasons to include it in a balanced diet.

But we should not give avocado oil a cardiovascular evidence base that science has not yet established.



GOOD NUTRITION
DOESN'T REQUIRE
EXAGGERATION.

Follow the nutrients.
Follow the research.
Know the difference.

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A STORY OF THE HEART™

OLIVE OIL vs AVOCADO OIL

SIMILAR FATS. DIFFERENT EVIDENCE.

*Two nutritious oils. Similar fatty-acid profiles.
But are their cardiovascular stories really the same?*

At first glance, extra-virgin olive oil and avocado oil have much in common. Both are predominantly composed of monounsaturated fats. Both contain oleic acid. Both can replace fats higher in saturated fatty acids. And both can form part of a balanced diet.

But nutritional similarity does not automatically mean scientific equivalence.
That is where the comparison becomes interesting.



1 THE FAT PROFILE



Both oils derive much of their fat from monounsaturated fatty acids, particularly oleic acid.

From a basic fatty-acid perspective, therefore, they occupy similar nutritional territory.

Replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats can help maintain normal blood cholesterol levels.

But cardiovascular health cannot be understood from fatty-acid composition alone.

2 THE BIOACTIVE DIFFERENCE



Extra-virgin olive oil contains a distinctive mixture of naturally occurring polyphenols, including compounds such as hydroxytyrosol and its derivatives.

These compounds have attracted considerable research interest because of their antioxidant and biological properties.

Avocado oil can also contain:



Vitamin E



Carotenoids



Phytosterols



Chlorophylls



Phenolic compounds

However, concentrations vary substantially according to processing, refinement, cultivar and storage.

Both oils contain more than fat — but their bioactive profiles are not identical.

3 WHERE THE EVIDENCE SEPARATES



Extra-virgin olive oil has been investigated through:

- ✓ Randomised controlled trials
- ✓ Mediterranean-diet interventions
- ✓ Prospective population studies
- ✓ Cardiovascular-event research
- ✓ Blood-pressure studies
- ✓ Blood-lipid research
- ✓ Endothelial-function studies

Avocado oil has a much smaller body of direct human research.

There is good evidence supporting unsaturated fats generally and a growing literature around whole avocados.

But evidence concerning whole avocados should not automatically be attributed to avocado oil.

4 CARDIOVASCULAR OUTCOMES



For extra-virgin olive oil, the evidence extends beyond biomarkers. Large Mediterranean-diet research has investigated major cardiovascular events, giving EVOO a depth of outcome evidence that few individual oils possess.

For avocado oil, direct evidence examining long-term cardiovascular outcomes remains limited.

This does not establish that avocado oil is inferior. It establishes that we know considerably more about one than the other.

5 WHAT ABOUT COOKING?



EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL
Distinctive flavour. Rich in polyphenols. Suitable for dressings and many everyday cooking applications.



REFINED AVOCADO OIL
Neutral flavour and generally high heat tolerance, making it particularly versatile for higher-temperature cooking.



VIRGIN AVOCADO OIL
More characteristic flavour and potentially greater retention of naturally occurring plant compounds.

There does not have to be one oil for every purpose.

THE COMPARISON

FACTOR	EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL	AVOCADO OIL
Main fat	Monounsaturated	Monounsaturated
Major fatty acid	Oleic acid	Oleic acid
Plant compounds	Polyphenols, vitamin E	Phytosterols, carotenoids, vitamin E, phenolics
Human research	Extensive	Limited / emerging
Cardiovascular-event evidence	Yes, within Mediterranean-diet trials	Insufficient direct evidence
Culinary role	Highly versatile	Highly versatile
Evidence position	Established	Emerging

THE BIGGER PICTURE



The question isn't: "Which oil wins?"

A better question is: "What does the evidence allow us to say about each one?"

Avocado oil does not need to be portrayed as inferior for extra-virgin olive oil to have the stronger evidence base.

- ✓ Both can be nutritious choices.
- ✓ Both can replace sources of saturated fat.
- ✓ Both can have a place in the kitchen.

But scientifically, they are not yet standing on equal ground.

KEY POINT



Similar fats.



Different compounds.



Very different depths of research.



Nutritional similarity does not equal evidential equivalence.

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A STORY OF THE HEART

Olive Oil & Avocado Oil — Summary

Across this series, one message stands out: *nutritional similarity does not necessarily mean equal scientific evidence.*

Extra-virgin olive oil and avocado oil are both predominantly rich in monounsaturated fat, particularly oleic acid, and both can form part of a balanced diet. But the strength of the cardiovascular research behind them is very different.



EXTRA-VIRGIN OLIVE OIL — THE ESTABLISHED STORY

EVOO has been studied extensively in human populations, particularly within Mediterranean dietary patterns. Research has examined its relationship with blood lipids, blood pressure, inflammation, vascular function and cardiovascular outcomes. Its naturally occurring polyphenols also distinguish it from simply being a source of “good fat.”



AVOCADO OIL — THE EMERGING STORY

Avocado oil has a promising nutritional profile. It provides monounsaturated fat and can contain vitamin E, phytosterols, carotenoids and other plant compounds. However, direct human research specifically investigating avocado oil remains comparatively limited. Much of what is known about cardiovascular benefits relates to whole avocado consumption rather than avocado oil itself.

THE COMPARISON



The two oils may look remarkably similar when judged by fatty-acid composition alone. But science asks a deeper question:

What has actually been demonstrated in humans?



For extra-virgin olive oil, the evidence base is substantial and established.



For avocado oil, the evidence is developing.

That does not make avocado oil an inferior food. It simply means we should distinguish between a plausible nutritional benefit and one supported by a large body of direct research.

THE BIGGER PICTURE



There does not need to be a winner.



Use extra-virgin olive oil for its established evidence, distinctive polyphenols and versatility.



Use avocado oil where its neutral flavour and cooking characteristics suit the food.



Both can have a place in the kitchen.



But when discussing heart health, the strength of the evidence matters.



SIMILAR FATS. DIFFERENT EVIDENCE.



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Understand the composition. Understand the research. Understand the difference.

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