

## VIRGIN COCONUT OIL NATURAL VIAGRA

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**A**part from keeping cholesterol levels under control, three spoonfuls of Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO) a day may enhance a person's sex life, findings of a research study showed. "Hindi lang pang-gata, pang-sex pa (Coconut meat extract is not only for cooking but also for sex)", Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala quipped in a press conference held at the Philippine Coconut Authority (Philcoa) building in Quezon City on 29 February 2012.

A team of scientists and doctors from the University of Santo Tomas (UST) presented to journalists the results of a clinical study of the effects of VCO on the human body. VCO refers to oil extracted from coconut meat or milk through the cold-compress method with the temperature not exceeding 47°C.

The study was the largest clinical research ever undertaken on the effects of VCO on cholesterol levels, Christina Binag of the UST Research Center for Natural and Applied Science, the team leader, said.

### VCO vs placebo drug

Commissioned by Philcoa, the study required 110 participants to take 3 tablespoons of VCO every day for 4 months while 79 others had a placebo drug for the same period. Results indicated decreases in triglycerides, a kind of fat produced in the liver, and very low density lipoprotein (VLDL), which is considered bad cholesterol, among the VCO takers. They also showed elevated high density lipoprotein (HDL) or good cholesterol. No change was seen in low density lipoprotein.

Scientists say that too much VLDL and other bad cholesterol types could lead to plaque formation in



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the inner lining of arteries that feed the heart and the brain. Clogged-up arteries could lead to a heart attack or stroke. "This improved cholesterol to HDL ratio can be translated to making the individual less prone to having heart attack or stroke," the UST team said. No change was seen in the lipid profile of the placebo group.

Aside from the clinical effects, the study reported that those who took VCO felt stronger and healthier. They reported regular bowel movement, increased appetite and stamina and better sleep, according to Binag. Some study participants said they were more virile during the test phase. "It was an interesting observation that 13% of the VCO takers experienced becoming sexually active in the whole duration of their participation in the VCO study", the team said.

But the VCO group also reported negative effects, such as stomachache, soft bowel, sweating and nausea. The study noted "other parameters" that were affected by the coconut oil.

"There was an unexplained rise in creatinine but still within the normal range. Elevations in Free Thyroid 3 and Free Thyroid 4 were noted due to enhanced thyroid function. No change was noted with BMI (Body Mass Index) and weight", it said. "In the past, we only hear anecdotes of the benefits. Now, it's the doctors and scientists who have confirmed it", Alcala said.

### Coconut farmers

The agriculture secretary said that those who would benefit from the study were not only those hoping to be more active in the bedroom. It will also help the country's coconut farmers as the medical evidence will boost the demand for VCO, he said.

The Philippines is the world's top exporter of coconut products. In 2011, export earnings from coconut products, the country's biggest farm export, reached US\$1.95 billion, a 20% growth from the previous year's figure, said Philcoa Administrator Euclides Forbes.

Coconut oil remains the main growth driver, earning US\$1.4 billion, 12% higher than the 2010 receipt of \$1.2 billion.

Although production value rose, the volume decreased to 1.5 billion MT in 2011 from 2.3 billion MT in 2010. JG Apostol, an associate professor and chairman of the UST Department of Pharmacology, said the research team would be publishing the results of its study in a peer-reviewed international journal. Other doctors from the University of the Philippines and De La Salle University reviewed the study and declared it sound and scientific.

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