

Canola Oil and Cancer The Facts

Key Messages:

- * Canola oil is a safe and healthy vegetable oil approved for use by the Australian food regulator;
- * Canola oil is recommended by leading heart health agencies around the world.
- * There is no evidence whatsoever of any link between consumption of canola oil and risk of developing cancer. Moreover, there is emerging evidence of the cancer fighting properties of canola oil.

Canola oil is safe and very healthy vegetable oil, and is approved by government health agencies around the world, including in Australia, for use as a food. Canola oil is consumed by tens of millions of people around the globe every day, and is recommended by leading health authorities because of its health properties, in particular, the low level of saturated fat and relatively high levels of omega 3 and 6 fats. These properties makes canola oil an ideal choice for people wanting to improve their overall health, and in particular, their heart health.

Replacing saturated fat with the unsaturated fats found in vegetable oils like canola, has been widely accepted for over 60 years as being one of the primary dietary means of reducing levels of cholesterol in the blood. High levels of cholesterol in the blood is a key risk factor for heart disease. For this reason, leading health authorities, such as the Australian National Heart Foundation, the American Heart Association and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada all recommend the use of canola oil as part of a heart healthy diet.

In relation to the risk of cancer from consuming canola oil, there is no scientific evidence to support this claim. Moreover, there is emerging evidence that there could be cancer fighting properties with canola oil. A recent study identified a statistically significant reduction in colon cancer (in rats) from consumption of canola oil;¹ while another recent study identified the vitamin E found in canola oil (and soy and corn oils) may have cancer fighting properties². A further study also concluded that "Use of canola oil ... (may have) significance for slowing growth of residual cancer cells in cancer survivors."³

Australian consumers of canola oil can be assured they are consuming an oil that is absolutely safe, highly nutritious, and, when used in place of saturated fat, providing a significant benefit for heart health.

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About Canola Oil:

Canola Oil is the oil derived from the seed of the brassica napus variety of rapeseed. It was selected from an extensive breeding program in the 1960's by Canadian researchers because of its favourable fatty acid profile.

Approximately 25 billion litres of canola (rapeseed) oil is consumed around the globe, with Australia consuming around 300 million litres in products such as liquid cooking oil, margarines, mayonnaise, in deep frying uses, and as an ingredient in many food products ranging from baked goods to sauces.

¹ . Bhatia E, et al *Chemopreventive effects of dietary canola oil on colon cancer development* Nutrition and Cancer. 2011;63(2):242-7.

² Chung S. Yang, et al, *Does Vitamin E Prevent or Promote Cancer?* Cancer Prevention Research May 1, 2012 5; 701

³ Hardman, W.E., *Dietary Canola Oil Suppressed Growth of Implanted MDA-MB 231 Human Breast Tumors in Nude Mice* Nutrition and Cancer Volume 57, Issue 2, 2007