

Ask Leyla: Could coconut oil help with my memory loss?

Q: I have trouble remembering words. What could be causing this? I've heard that coconut butter can be helpful for memory loss. Would that work for me? If so, what is the amount I should take every day?

A: Memory loss can have many causes. How old are you? Have you checked in with your doctor or a neurologist for a full workup? This is the first order of business. At the very least, you may be deficient in B12 or have poor circulation.



Have you recently started taking medication? Some medications can cause memory loss. Are you taking a cholesterol lowering medication? Statins are notorious for creating or exacerbating memory deficits because we need cholesterol for proper brain function.

An underactive thyroid also can trigger forgetfulness. Get it checked out.

High blood sugar associated with prediabetes and diabetes can damage blood vessels in the brain, leading to memory problems, confusion and irritability.

Are your cortisol levels high? This is a stress hormone and too much of it can shrink the hippocampus, the part of the brain responsible for memory.

Do you drink alcohol? You may have a thiamin deficiency (B1), which can impact your speech and word formation. And, no, you don't have to consume a lot of alcohol to have a thiamin deficiency. A poor diet alone will do it. A severe thiamin deficiency can lead to Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome, a disorder characterized by chronic poor memory, confusion, agitation and hostility.

Maybe your homocysteine is high? High homocysteine is an independent risk factor for dementia, as well as stroke and bone fracture.

As you can see, a full workup with your doctor is critical to reveal the cause of your trouble. Only a proper medical assessment can help determine an appropriate treatment plan for you.

That said, coconut oil helps to convert metabolism to lipolysis/ketosis. Ketones, a by-product of fat metabolism, are the brain's preferred fuel source (along with some glucose when available). A ketogenic diet can be a helpful treatment for dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Typically, anywhere from four to 12 tbsp (spread throughout the day) is a recommended dosage for coconut oil. Embarking on a ketogenic diet under supervision from a qualified nutritionist is immensely helpful if you suffer from these conditions.

To read more about the benefits of coconut oil and memory, visit www.coconutketones.com.

To your health!