

Ask Leyla: What's your opinion on avocado oil?



Q: What do you think of avocado oil so widely used today in mayonnaise?

A: Avocados are a superfood, rich in monounsaturated fats and beneficial plant sterols—that's the plant's *cholesterol*, in case you didn't know.

Avocado oil in its native form is a runner-up to first cold-pressed, extra virgin olive oil. In my opinion, refined vegetable oils are dangerous. The refining process involves bleaching and deodorizing, leaving you with a clear, odorless, but potentially rancid product. We shouldn't be consuming that.

Compared to other vegetable oils such as soy, canola, cottonseed (the worst!), safflower, and corn oil, avocado oil is healthier by far. Having a high smoke point, higher than 400 degrees Fahrenheit, it's desirable for high heat cooking. Those other vegetable oils contain pro-inflammatory omega 6 fats and are very volatile under high heat—not healthy to cook with.

Avocado oil is rich in lutein, a carotenoid found in red, orange, and yellow produce. It also contains vitamin E, an important antioxidant. Both of these micronutrients are beneficial for eyes and skin. Lutein is shown to help prevent macular degeneration. Due to its high oleic acid content—a beneficial

monounsaturated fat—avocado oil is shown to lower blood pressure and help raise HDL cholesterol levels, improving lipid profiles.

To your health!

Leyla Muedin, MS, RD, CDN