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Befriend healthy oils to add a shot of immunity to your meals

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Often, healthy recipes can turn into unhealthy ones and vice versa by the use of the wrong oil. From coconut to olive, vegetable to canola, avocado to rapeseed oil – one look at the website of a grocery store, and you are confused about which oil to choose.



Prachi M, nutrition coach, says, "Our traditional nut oils such as sesame oil, groundnut oil, coconut oil as well as ghee are well researched to prove as all-rounders when it comes to health benefits, including improving immunity."

Manisha Mehta, sports nutritionist, explains, "Plant oils have different composition of fatty acids, which give us essential healthy fats, and different types of polyunsaturated fatty acids and unsaturated fatty acids which perform a lot of functions in our body — from energy to immunity." However, she cautions, "Quantity is key. Limit your oil content to three-four teaspoons in the entire day."

Oil is the heart of almost every favourite Indian dish. And in a world struck by a pandemic, many of us are looking for cooking oils with immunity-boosting properties. Prachi M recommends, "Sesame oil is packed with vitamin B6, vitamin E, magnesium, calcium, zinc, copper, dietary and flavonoids phenolic antioxidants. All these nutrients give sesame oil immune stimulant and antidepressant properties." She also suggests peanut oil, which is rich in antioxidants and helps prevents "viral, fungal and bacterial infections".

Another good option is coconut oil, a rage among the health conscious. "Coconut oil is a great support to the gut. It contains lauric acid, that has antibacterial, antiviral and antiparasitic properties," says Karishma Shah, integrative health nutritionist and holistic wellness coach, who suggests having one teaspoon of it on an empty stomach.

Meanwhile, Mehta says cooking in desi ghee helps in digestion, resulting in building and maintaining immunity.