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# COCONUT CRAZE

This popular ingredient can be a tough nut to crack thanks to the varying results it provides to different skin types. BY HEATHER MIKESSELL

**THERE WAS A TIME NOT LONG AGO WHEN COCONUT OIL** was considered a cure-all for anything and everything. It was even rumored to be a treatment for Alzheimer's disease. At the height of its popularity in 2015, it was thought to improve immunity, boost the metabolism, and help fight tooth decay. Remember when oil pulling (rinsing the mouth with coconut oil) was all the rage? Unfortunately, it fell from favor when the American Heart Association denounced coconut oil for having too much saturated fat. According to market research firm SPINS, which tracks the health and wellness sector, sales of coconut oil plummeted in 2017. However, coconut still provides a host of beauty benefits. In fact, when it comes to the skin, its high saturated fat content actually works as an advantage. "Coconut oil, being high in saturated fats, can help trap water within skin and improve the skin barrier," says Shannon McLinden, founder and president of FarmHouse Fresh. "It's a fabulous natural emollient." The same can be said for coconut milk. "Coconut oil and coconut milk have been used for skincare by the indigenous population in countries such as the Philippines and in Southeast Asia where coconuts are the staple crop," says Vivian Valenty, Ph.D., president of VB Cosmetics. "It is from this history of use that coconut oil has been found to be an excellent moisturizer and a natural sunscreen with anti-aging properties."

The ingredient is so beloved by Kiana Cabell and Gigi Goldman, cofounders of Kopari, that it became the basis of their



skincare brand. "As a family, my husband and I had been using coconut oil for everything," says Goldman. "It's truly a miracle product, and I was taking my jar of coconut oil from the kitchen to the bathroom to the kids' rooms. It slowly dawned on us that there was a huge opportunity to build off the natural beauty benefits of coconut oil." With its refreshing and tropical scent, coconut has long been a coveted ingredient in lip balms, face and body washes, moisturizers, sunscreens, and more. Here, we share what has spa-goers going cuckoo for coconuts. ●



## palm power

What makes coconut and its related ingredients so effective? Our panel of experts break down the facts.

"Coconut oil works to make skin healthy, hydrated, supple, and glowing due to its high concentration of fatty acids. Lauric, capric, and caprylic acids are good fats that help with overall skin health. It's also full of restorative proteins and vitamin E, which are loaded with antioxidants to keep skin ageless and protect against dryness."—*Gigi Goldman, cofounder, Kopari*

"Coconut oil is uniquely rich in medium-chain tryglycerides (MCT). These are saturated fats consisting of fatty acids having six to 14 carbon atoms. MCTs make excellent carrier oils, because their size allows them easy penetration of the epidermal layer to lower transepidermal water loss. Their fungal, anti-viral, and anti-microbial properties may well be



attributed to their ability to penetrate and break down the cell membranes of microorganisms.”—*Vivian Valenty, Ph.D., president, VB Cosmetics*

“Coconut oil has incredible moisturizing effects. When it is used, it can help lock in moisture, which in turn eliminates water loss and gives the skin a beautiful healthy glow.”—*Ashley Stowers, account executive and national educator, CelleCle*

“We love the low melting point of coconut oil. It helps it melt beautifully into skin. And the milk is so versatile—for cleansers, moisturizers, and even bath soaks. It provides silky softness anywhere we incorporate coconut ingredients.”—*Shannon McLinden, founder and president, FarmHouse Fresh*

“Besides being beneficial for the skin, coconut is excellent for the immune system. Coconut is antiviral, antifungal, antibacterial, and anti-parasitic. It is very nutritious and full of vitamins, minerals,

fiber, amino acids, and electrolytes. It is great for healthy, luminous hair and supports healthy bones and teeth.”—*Thalia A. Walkup, business development manager, Body Bliss*

“Coconut oil helps prevent premature aging and wrinkling of the skin, because it has huge antioxidant properties. One hundred grams of coconut oil has about 0.1 mg of vitamin E, thus nourishing the skin’s properties.”—*Emilie Hoyt, founder and CEO, Lather*

“Coconut oil and milk are high in saturated fats, vitamin E, and protein. When applied to the skin, they allow the skin to feel more moisturized and assist in repairing any damaged skin.”—*Heidi Ackerman, vice president of marketing, Epicuren Discovery*

“Coconut oil is rich in anti-inflammatory benefits to soothe and soften skin while keeping it moisturized and nourished.”—*Jennifer Yen, founder, Purlisse* ●

## THINGS TO *consider*

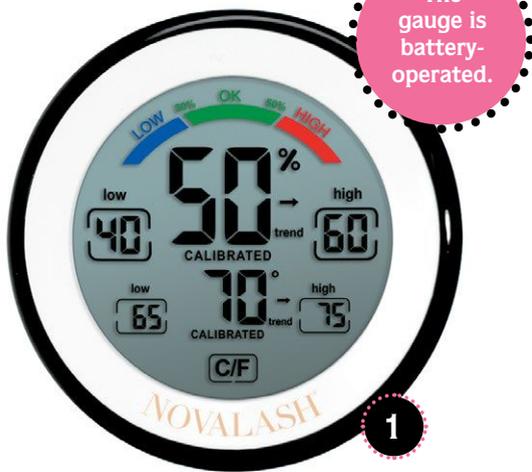
Coconut oil is hailed for its moisturizing abilities, but it often gets somewhat of a bad rap for its comedogenic rating, which refers to how likely the oil is to clog pores. According to Kopari’s Gigi Goldman, there are no standardized tests or organizations that verify the comedogenic claim. Instead, various conflicting opinions exist on the topic. “Although we’re fans of coconut, it can give mixed results in skincare,” says Body Bliss’s Thalia A. Walkup. “Sometimes for skin that is very dry and skin that is prone to acne, coconut can cause more dryness and more breakouts. Everyone’s skin chemistry is different and can and will respond differently to coconut.” While most experts don’t recommend it for oily and acneic skin, some find it to have beneficial properties that can actually help improve such conditions. “Contrary to popular belief, coconut oil can be compatible and helpful with oily skin,” says Lather’s Emilie Hoyt. “This is because it has many antibacterial properties that help kill bacteria found in oily skin and acne.” For others, coconut oil can clog pores. What everyone does agree on, however, is that you should avoid using coconut-based products on those who are allergic to coconut. ●



# fresh FINDS

Check out this month's new products.

BY NATALIE MANEVAL



**1**  
**COMPANY:** Novalash  
**PRODUCT:** Aura is a tool that gives temperature and humidity readings. It helps practitioners gauge the moisture levels and adjust their workspace. Adhesive strength is determined by moisture levels.  
[www.novalash.com](http://www.novalash.com)

**2**  
**COMPANY:** Qosmedix  
**PRODUCT:** Silicone Applicators from Qosmedix come in three shapes: hearts, teardrops, and circles. Each can be used to apply liquid foundation and can be washed with soap and water.  
[www.qosmedix.com](http://www.qosmedix.com)

**3**  
**COMPANY:** Dermalogica  
**PRODUCT:** Biolumin-C Serum uses ascorbyl methylsilanol pectinate, which protects the skin from free-radical damage. Another key ingredient is a stable form of vitamin C.  
[www.dermalogica.com](http://www.dermalogica.com)

**4**  
**COMPANY:** Comfort Zone  
**PRODUCT:** Body Active Booster is formulated to be applied before workouts. The booster improves microcirculation, increases the oxygen in tissue, and generates heat without irritation.  
[www.comfortzone.it](http://www.comfortzone.it)

**5**  
**COMPANY:** CelleClé Skincare  
**PRODUCT:** StemBiotix AquaGel absorbs quickly and delivers moisture to the skin. Using plant stem cells, the gel evens skintone, reduces redness, and increases firmness.  
[www.cellecleskincare.com](http://www.cellecleskincare.com)