

Is ghee good for you?

It is accepted that ghee is made up of almost entirely of saturated fat. Then why have people from the Indian sub-continent been eating this for so long?



When cooking, it can be unhealthy to heat polyunsaturated oils such as vegetable oils to high temperatures. In doing so it creates peroxides and other free radicals. These substances can lead to a variety of health problems and diseases. So what is better ghee or vegetable oils?

Ghee has a very high smoke point (the temperature at which a cooking fat or oil begins to break down to glycerol and free fatty acids) and does not burn easily during cooking. Ghee has the more stable saturated bonds and so is lot less likely to form the dangerous free radicals when cooking. Ghee has short chain fatty acids that are also metabolized very readily by the body. So is ghee good or bad you may well ask?

Laboratory studies have shown ghee to reduce cholesterol both in the serum and intestine. It does it by triggering an increased secretion of biliary lipids (chemicals that comes out of your bile). Though ghee may help in reducing cholesterol it is not recommended to eat it as a medicine.

Ghee is also good for nerves and brain. It helps control eye pressure and is beneficial to glaucoma patients.

Ghee is most notably said to stimulate the secretion of stomach acids to help with digestion, while other fats, such as butter and oils, slow down the digestive process and can sit heavily in the stomach. This is undesirable.

In addition to ghee's nutritional value, it is rich with antioxidants and acts as an aid in the absorption of vitamins and minerals from other foods and feeds all the layers of body tissue and serves to strengthen the immune system. It also contains a high

concentration of butyric acid, a fatty acid that contains anti-viral properties, which is believed to inhibit the growth of cancerous tumours.

Ghee is also good for treatment of burns and blisters. Ayurvedic research shows that ghee promotes learning and increases memory retention. Ghee is also low in *Kapha* energy – the fat increasing energy in the body. According to the book [*Slimmer in 1 hour...Slim Forever*](#), the authors argue that it more advisable to eat ghee rather than margarine or butter to reduce weight due to ghee's *Kapha* energy balancing ability. So should you eat Ghee? If you are healthy, yes. Is this why we use ghee in temples as opposed to oils?

Ravi Bhanot

Author [*Slimmer in 1 hour...Slim Forever*](#) Director Coolherbals Ltd and The Ayurveda Institute of Europe.