

Committed to improving the health and well-being  
of Sri Lankans globally.

Diabetes and  
Drinking: Dos and  
Don'ts



# Health & Views

Nutrition for Crohn's  
Disease or Ulcerative  
Colitis

**FEBRUARY 1<sup>st</sup> Issue 2025**

Compiled and Edited by Dr. Harold Gunatillake

Dear Readers,

As we come together to celebrate Sri Lanka's Independence Day on February 4th, 2024, it is a time for reflection, unity, and renewal. This significant day marks our journey towards freedom and self-determination, a journey filled with resilience, hope, and the unwavering spirit of our people.

### **A Legacy of Resilience**

Sri Lanka's history is a testament to the strength and resilience of its people. From ancient times, through colonial struggles and the eventual triumph of independence, we have shown that our spirit cannot be broken. As we honour the heroes who fought for our freedom, we are reminded of the importance of perseverance and the power of collective effort.

### **Health and Well-being: A National Priority**

On this Independence Day, let us also reflect on our nation's health and well-being. Good health is the foundation of a prosperous society, and we must prioritise our physical, mental, and emotional well-being. As we move forward, let us embrace practices that promote healthy living, from balanced diets and regular exercise to mental health awareness and stress management.

### **Building a Healthier Future Together**

Our nation's future depends on its people's health and vitality. We can ensure that Sri Lanka continues to thrive by fostering a wellness and preventive care culture. This involves individual efforts, community initiatives, and policies supporting public health. Together, we can build a healthier and more resilient nation.

### **Unity in Diversity**

As we celebrate this Independence Day, let us also celebrate our rich cultural heritage and the diversity that makes Sri Lanka unique. Our strength lies in our unity; we can achieve great things through mutual respect and understanding. Let us work together to bridge divides and create a harmonious society where everyone has the opportunity to flourish.

### **Looking Forward with Optimism**

The journey of independence is ongoing. As we look to the future, let us carry forward the lessons of the past and the values that define us as a nation. With hope, determination, and a collective commitment to health and well-being, we can continue to build a brighter future for all Sri Lankans.

### **Happy Independence Day!**

With warm regards and best wishes for a healthy and prosperous year ahead,  
Dr Harold Gunatillake, Editor

# What can coconut water do to your body?

**\*\*Story by Huong Duong\*\***

According to health news platforms Eat Well and Healthline, regularly drinking coconut water can help replenish electrolytes, lower blood pressure, and improve digestion.

## **Replenish Electrolytes\*\***

Often referred to as "nature's sports drink," coconut water contains a high concentration of electrolytes such as potassium, sodium, magnesium, and calcium.

These minerals are essential for muscle contraction, nerve transmission, and maintaining fluid balance in the body. Dietitian Hannah Van Ark emphasises that coconut water's rich electrolyte profile makes it an ideal option for rehydration, especially after losing fluids and electrolytes due to illnesses like vomiting, diarrhoea or sweating during exercise. Its osmotic properties, similar to human plasma, make it particularly effective for restoring electrolytes lost during dehydration.

## **\*\*Lower Blood Pressure\*\***

Due to its high potassium content, coconut water can positively affect blood pressure. One cup of coconut water contains 404 mg of potassium, which helps maintain optimal blood pressure levels by dilating blood vessels and counteracting the effects of sodium.

## **\*Support Bone Health\*\***

Potassium-rich foods and drinks, including coconut water, are vital for enhancing bone strength and density, thus helping to prevent osteoporosis—a condition characterised by weak bones. Potassium maintains electrolyte balance and cardiovascular health and regulates the body's acid-base balance. An acidic environment in the body can lead to the release of calcium from bones to neutralise excess acid, weakening them over time. Potassium helps restore this balance and prevents calcium loss.

## **Improve Digestive Health\*\***

Coconut water's hydrating properties can enhance gut health. Its anti-inflammatory and antibacterial qualities may benefit the gut microbiome. This makes coconut water effective in alleviating irritation in the intestinal lining and providing essential nutrients, thereby reducing pain associated with digestive disorders.

## **Reduce Cellular Damage\*\***

Free radicals—harmful molecules generated by normal metabolic processes, exposure to toxins, and external pollutants—can pose daily threats to cells. When the body is overwhelmed by excessive free radicals, it may experience oxidative stress, which damages cells and increases the risk of chronic diseases. Antioxidants found in coconut water, such as vitamin C, cytokinins, and phenolic compounds, help combat this damage.

However, Van Ark notes that these antioxidant effects have primarily been studied in animals, and additional research in humans is needed to confirm these findings.



## **8 Signs of a 'Silent' Heart Attack**

You probably don't think a heart attack could happen without you even knowing it. But it can, and it's more common than you might think for people with diabetes.

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## **Can Certain Foods Boost Weight Loss?**

Find out how some nutritious foods that keep you fuller longer -- like avocados, nuts, and berries -- can help shrink your waistline.

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## [4 Ways to Advocate for Yourself After a Diabetes Diagnosis](#)

Connecting with the right resources is an important step in making sure you get quality care from everyone on your diabetes team.

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## [Drinking This Juice Every Day Could Reduce Your Heart Disease Risk](#)

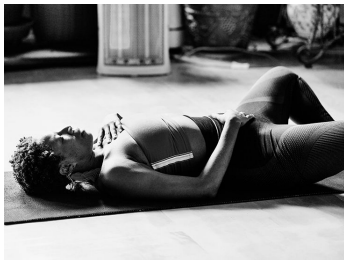
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## [Diet rich in whole plant foods and fish may keep colon cancer at bay](#)

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## [15 home remedies for migraine relief and prevention](#)

There are many strategies for treating and preventing migraine symptoms. Here are 15 home remedies for migraine relief and prevention.

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[Climate Change and Your Health](#)

Seasonal weather changes increase your risk for certain illnesses. Climate change packs an even bigger punch. Here's how to protect yourself.

[5 five common health impacts](#)

## [Are You Lactose Intolerant?](#)

Lactose intolerance causes uncomfortable symptoms after you eat dairy products. Here's what to do about it.

[Spot the symptoms](#)

## [What Causes High Blood Pressure?](#)

High blood pressure (hypertension) is when the force of blood pushing against your artery walls is consistently too high.

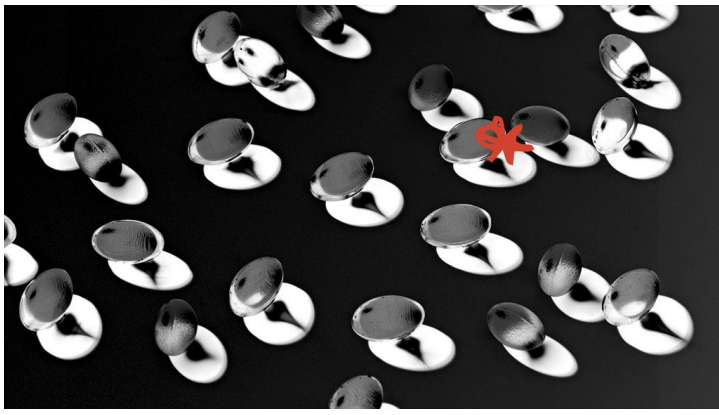
[A silent killer](#)

## [Atlantic diet may help prevent metabolic syndrome](#)



Recent research suggests that following the Atlantic diet, which is similar to the Mediterranean diet, may help prevent metabolic syndrome and other metabolic disorders.

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## Omega-3s: Potential protection against autoimmune disease

Autoimmune diseases affect over 24 million people in the United States, a concerning figure that emphasises the need for prevention. A [large-scale study](#) suggests that omega-3 fatty acids, the core nutrients in fish oil supplements, may offer long-lasting protection against the onset of these conditions.

Our bodies don't naturally produce omega-3s, which makes diet and supplements vital sources. These fatty acids naturally curb inflammation, a key factor in autoimmune diseases, where the body's defences mistakenly attack healthy tissues.

In the new study, over 20,000 participants were randomly assigned to receive either the supplement or a placebo. Remarkably, after the trial ended, those who had previously taken omega-3 supplements maintained a lowered risk of developing autoimmune diseases for another 2 years. This persistent protection was not observed with vitamin D, though its [initial benefits](#) looked promising.

“Supplementation should be considered only with adding a high-nutrient-dense diet, good quality sleep, stress management, and limitation of sedentary behaviour,” emphasises registered dietitian Kristin Kirkpatrick. She also stressed the importance of choosing the right supplements for safety and maximising potential benefits.

If you're interested in the potential benefits of supplementation, research [reliable brands](#) and work with a doctor to determine the right dosage for your needs, considering existing [dietary sources of omega-3](#) or [vitamin D](#).

Learn why [omega-3 supplements may be more effective in preventing autoimmune diseases](#).

**Also making headlines this week:**

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- [The truth about healthy habits and your aging brain](#)
- [The mineral that could shield your ears from everyday noise](#)
- [Common infection found to raise women's heart risks](#)