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The efficacy of virgin coconut oil in weight reduction

Gilbert G Marzan, Cydrick James O Molina, Michael Gabriel E Santos, Edizza T Andrada, Patricia Marie C Calano, Christy A Dulnuan, Xaris Faith D Gapasin, Noah Elaine Q Guzman, Cristina Camille M Hisanan, Kimberly Rose A Manipon, Karryl Febie B Poncian, Mariebeth L Tacadena and **Realen C Torres**
Saint Louis University School of Nursing, Philippines

Background: Overweight (BMI of >23 but <25) and obesity (BMI of >25) are the fifth leading risks for global deaths. Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) placed second in obesity statistics (Tiu, 2012). In CAR, Benguet has the highest obesity rate (Northern Philippines times, 2011). Virgin coconut oil (VCO) has weight reducing properties. VCO contains the highest proportion of medium chain fatty acids (MCFAs). MCFA's are easily oxidized and are not stored in adipose tissue. MCFAs also destroy candida which triggers weight gain. It also enhances metabolism and improves thyroid function.

Aim: To determine the efficacy of virgin coconut oil in weight reduction. Furthermore, the researchers sought to find out if there is a significant difference in the effectiveness of Virgin Coconut Oil in weight reduction according to gender.

Methods: Randomized clinical trial, pre-test post-test control group design was utilized. There were 34 subjects for the experimental group and 30 subjects for the control group. After approval from the research ethics committee, pretest was done for both groups measuring weight, BMI, waist circumference, waist hip ratio and body fat percentage. VCO was given to experimental group for 28 days and no treatment was given to the control group. The parameters were measured on the 5th week. Paired T-test analysis was utilized.

Result and Findings: All parameters significantly decreased except for the body fat percentage. Males have a significant reduction in weight and BMI while only the waist circumference significantly decreased in females.

Conclusion: VCO is effective in weight reduction. Gender affects the efficacy of VCO in weight reduction.

Recommendation: Similar study should be conducted in a more controlled setting. The VCO should be computed based on weight and lipid profiles be measured. Flavored VCO may be considered in future studies.

lighttoheaven02@yahoo.com