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Coconut Water: Nature's Sports Drink?

August 17, 2010 12:00 AM by [Mehmet C. Oz, MD](#), and [Michael F. Roizen, MD](#) |

Have you tried coconut water? We YOU Docs have, and let's just say we're not overwhelmed. Still, we're betting our reusable water bottles that coconut water makes the top 10 list of food trends this year. Sales have topped \$60 million (stores can't keep it on the shelves) and PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, and even Madonna have invested in it.

We think coconut water belongs on the "everything old is new again" list. People who live where coconut palms grow have sipped the clear liquid in young coconuts for eons. Now that entrepreneurs have marketed it in the United States, it's being pitched as "Mom Nature's sports drink," a healthy way to rehydrate after exercise.

True, coconut water scores higher than a sugary dayglow-blue sports drink: Cup for cup, it has half the sugar (6 grams instead of 13) and fewer calories (46 vs. 63). Plus, coconut water boasts way more potassium (600 milligrams vs. 37 milligrams). But if you're watching salt, the 250 milligrams of sodium make it iffy.

Coconut water is also iffy if you're watching your wallet: \$3 a bottle is no bargain. Does your body need it after a workout? If you're doing hot yoga or taking a spinning class that lasts more than an hour and leaves you drenched, maybe. Otherwise, stick with our top drink: water. It keeps you hydrated, has no calories, and costs nothing. (If you like fizzy water, a

home carbonation machine makes adding bubbles easy and will pay for itself over time. Try it, and then send half of the savings to our favorite charity, healthcorps.org.)

Here's another coconut-inspired health trend: coconut oil. Is it good for you? [Here's what we think.](#)

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Michael F. Roizen, MD & Mehmet C. Oz, MD

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