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Mustard, coconut oil, ghee good for heart'

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HEALTHY LIVING Repeated heating of the same oil must be avoided

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NEW DELHI: Turns out, oils used by our grandma — mustard oil, coconut oil and ghee — are the healthiest for Indian cooking, according to an article published in the latest issue of Indian Heart Journal.

Oil is subjected to very high temperatures for deep frying and stir frying, which are common processes for cooking curries and vegetables in our kitchens. "Hence, Indians need to cook in oils which are high in saturated fat content and are stable even at high temperatures and do not break down into harmful components like free radicals, trans fats, malondialdehyde (MDA), which not only put individuals at risk of heart diseases, but some of the components may potentially be carcinogenic," said Dr SC Manchanda, one of the authors of the paper and senior consultant in the department of cardiology at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital.

Refined oils, which are readily available in our neighbourhood grocery stores are a strict no-no, according to the paper. During the process of refining, mechanical and chemical processes are used to extract oil from the seeds.



■ The best oil to buy are non-refined mustard oil and canola oil, ghee, a combination of canola and flaxseed oil and soyabean oil. HT FILE

They are then heated repeatedly at high temperatures of up to 270°C for deodorisation. "These high temperatures result in loss of anti-oxidants and produce all free radicals and trans fat, both of which are harmful for the body," said Dr Manchanda.

When buying oil, people need to keep four things in mind — it should have low saturated fat but be stable, have Omega 3 fatty acid, be non-refined and have no trans fat. According to the experts, the best oil to buy are non-refined mustard oil, non-refined canola oil, ghee, a combination of canola and flax-

seed oil and soyabean oil.

"The important thing to remember is that repeated heating of the same oil must be avoided. It just exaggerates the harmful effects," said Dr Manchanda, quoting an Indian study, which found high levels of trans fat in samples of oil collected from halwais who used the same oil for repeated frying.

He wrote the paper along with Dr Santosh Jain Passi, public health and nutrition consultant and former director of Institute of Home Economics, University of Delhi.

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