

VitalNews

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF VITALREMEDYMD

APRIL 2004 VOL. I

It seems with each passing week there is another caveat concerning **what we should eat** or what we should avoid in our diets.

WRITTEN BY LAURA BAUM M.D.

If you are beginning to feel as though you need a degree in nutrition just to go to the grocery store, I understand. Some days I stand in front of the open refrigerator and just get stuck. Between trying to count calories or carbs as my metabolism plummets with increasing age, and considering the issue of what nutrients to include for

optimal health, it's just getting to feel like work. High protein, low carb, good fats...Who would have thought there could be a *good* fat. Isn't that an oxymoron? Well, after reviewing the following list, you'll likely agree this might be worth taking the time to consider. Emerging evidence indicates that omega-3 fatty acids, the "good" fats, may have potential benefits in the prevention and/or treatment of the following health conditions:

- Alzheimer's disease
- Asthma
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Bipolar disorder and Depression
- Cancer
- Cardiovascular disease
- Crohn's disease and Ulcerative colitis
- Diabetes, Eczema and Psoriasis
- High blood pressure
- Huntington's disease
- Lupus
- Migraine headaches
- Multiple sclerosis
- Obesity
- Osteoarthritis
- Rheumatoid arthritis

Wow, that's impressive. Now, before I continue, are we clear on the omega-3 issue?

Let's break it down...The fats that we eat have been divided into three categories: the good (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated), the bad (saturated), and the just plain awful (trans-fats). In the good group there are the omega-3s, and there is wide agreement that the omega-3 fats are especially healthful. Now to take it further; there are three types of omega-3 fats: EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid), DHA (docosahexaenoic acid), and ALA (alpha-linolenic acid). All three varieties are good for you, but evidence for the EPA and DHA found in fish and fish oils is strongest. ALA is found in soybeans, walnuts, pumpkin seeds, canola seed and flaxseed. These are all nutritious and good for you in moderation. Walnuts, for example, have been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to bear a qualified health claim related to reducing the risk of heart disease, that is, "scientific evidence suggests but does not prove that eating 1.5 ounces per day of walnuts as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease." Flaxseed is a fine source of fiber; but its main selling point is its ALA content. Here's the thing though. ALA is only *indirectly* beneficial; the body uses most of it for energy and metabolizes a small percentage of ALA into EPA and DHA. If you're looking to boost your omega-3 intake, fish and fish oil are more efficient than flaxseed or other sources of ALA.

As you now know, you should be looking to boost your omega-3 intake. Dozens of studies have shown that eating fish lowers your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Now, randomized controlled trials have clearly demonstrated that omega-3 fatty acids, DHA and EPA, can significantly reduce the occurrence of cardiovascular events in patients with coronary artery disease. The largest study to date of omega-3 fatty acids and heart disease is the GISSI-Prevention study. More than 2800 heart attack survivors were given

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Why Take
VitalOils™?

SETH BAUM, M.D.
Founder
VitalRemedyMD

Medical News

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Did You Know

LAURA BAUM, M.D.
Editor in Chief

"Studies show
omega-3 fatty
acids benefit
the heart."

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purified EPA/DHA supplements and were asked to take one capsule daily which provided 850 mg of EPA/DHA in roughly equal amounts. Death from any cause was reduced by 20%, and interestingly, sudden death (presumably from a second heart attack) fell by 45% compared with a similar number of patients not given supplementation. This study, along with others, points directly to EPA and DHA as the agents responsible for the cardiovascular health benefit. The ways that omega-3 fatty acids reduce cardiovascular disease risk are still being studied. However, research has shown that they:

- Decrease risk of arrhythmias (abnormal heart rhythms) which can lead to sudden cardiac death
- Decrease triglyceride levels
- Decrease progression of atherosclerotic plaque; stabilize existing plaque so it is less likely to rupture and cause sudden heart attacks
- Lower incidence of blood clotting which can lead to heart attack or stroke
- Reduce inflammatory responses
- Slightly lower blood pressure

The American Heart Association currently provides the following guidelines: Americans should increase their consumption of fish, particularly fatty species, to at least two servings per week. People with coronary heart disease may consider 1,000 mg of combined EPA and DHA daily from dietary sources and/or supplements.

Those patients with elevated triglycerides may benefit from even higher doses as recommended by their physicians. These fats can be derived directly from certain foods, most notably cold water fish including salmon, tuna, halibut, and herring. Many people are reluctant to increase their intake of fatty fish because it may contain relatively high levels of potentially harmful pollutants such as mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and dioxins. Exposure to pollutants can be minimized by eating different types of fish from numerous sources and limiting consumption of large, long-lived species such as shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish. Your best choice is migratory fish like wild salmon, halibut, haddock, and trout. Also the small fish like anchovies, herring and sardines are good choices. Farmed salmon is potentially less healthful for several reasons. It usually contains a lower level of the omega-3s and a higher concentration of PCBs than wild salmon because of differences in what the fish eat. And, since farm raised salmon don't eat the shrimp and krill that give wild salmon their healthy pink color, chemicals may be used to artificially give them color. All these issues make our choices a bit more challenging, (I told you it was hard work), but clearly this is not an area of preventative health care that can be ignored by physicians or their patients. Getting your supply of DHA and EPA from the best food sources available combined with a highly purified fish oil supplement may be the way to go.

medical news and events

Fish Oil Supplements Modify Cholesterol Plaque and Reduce Heart Risk

Researchers at the University of Southampton, England, have shown that omega-3 fish oils – well known for their anti-inflammatory properties – are quickly absorbed into artery plaque and reduce its tendency to rupture. A study was conducted with 170 patients scheduled for surgery on their carotid arteries.

Before surgery, the patients were asked to take (1) 1.4 grams of omega-3 fish oils, rich in EPA and DHA, (2) 3.6 grams of omega-6 fatty acids in sunflower oil, or (3) no supplements.

Patients took the supplements for an average of 42 days. After surgery, portions of the patients' carotid arteries were saved and studied. Plaque from patients taking omega-3 fish oils had a higher proportion of EPA and DHA and a lower proportion of linoleic acid, an omega-6 fat, indicating that one type of fat can displace another. In addition, plaque from patients taking the omega-3 fish oils had thick fibrous caps and no signs of inflammation. In contrast, plaque from the two other groups of patients was thinner, inflamed, and more likely to rupture. *Lancet*, 2003;361: 577-85.

Why Take VitalOils™?

VitalOils™ is the optimal Fish Oil supplement. Its high-potency, concentrated and quality controlled form enables people with known heart disease to meet the American Heart Association's recommendations by swallowing just two Softgels daily. The addition of a small dose of pure Vitamin E, in the optimal form of mixed tocopherols, helps maintain the integrity of the heart-protective omega-3 fats (EPA and DHA) which constitute *VitalOils™*. As VitalRemedyMD always strives to provide the safest and best nutritional supplements, we not only have every batch of *VitalOils™* analyzed by independent FDA registered laboratories, but we also further

cleanse our oils through the scientific processes of molecular distillation and winterization. As an added benefit to our patients, we have diminished the odor inherent in fish oils by combining our own unique, and 100% natural blend of cinnamon and menthol.

SUPPLEMENT FACTS

Serving size: two softgels

Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA) 400mg
Eicosapentaenoic Acid (EPA) 600mg
Vitamin E as natural mixed tocopherols 40IU
Tincture of Cinammon/Menthol

intelligent indulgences

Pan Poached Salmon Piccata

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup water
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1/8 teaspoon chicken broth granules
2 (4-6 oz. each) Salmon steaks or fillets
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon capers
Black pepper, to taste
Chopped parsley, for garnish

Bring water and lemon juice to a boil in medium-sized skillet. Stir in chicken granules. Reduce heat to a simmer and place salmon in pan. Cover and simmer over low heat, 10 minutes per inch of thickness, measured at the thickest part, or until fish flakes when tested with a fork. Remove salmon from pan; keep warm. Boil remaining liquid in pan until it reduces to approximately 1/4 cup. Whisk in butter and stir in capers. Spoon sauce over fish. Season with pepper and sprinkle with fresh parsley. Makes two servings. Note: Recipe may be easily doubled.



Omega-3 Fatty Acids for Depression In a preliminary study, the addition of omega-3 fatty acids improved antidepressant response in a small group of patients. Outpatients with major depressive disorder and elevated scores on the Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression despite at least 4 weeks of ongoing drug therapy were enrolled in the study. In the 22 patients who completed 8 weeks of treatment, HAM-D scores were decreased to a significantly greater degree with omega-3 fatty acids compared with placebo. (*European Neuropsychopharm* Aug 2003; 13:267-71)

Mercury, Fish Oils, and the Risk of Myocardial Infarction In a case-control study conducted in eight European countries and Israel, the joint association of mercury levels in toenail clippings and DHA levels in adipose tissue with the risk of a first myocardial infarction was evaluated. The study found that the toenail mercury level was directly associated with the risk of myocardial infarction (increased mercury caused increased risk), and the adipose-tissue DHA level was inversely associated with the risk (high DHA decreased risk). High mercury content, they concluded, may diminish the cardioprotective effect of fish intake. (*N Engl J Med* 2002;347:1747-54)



q&a

patient queries

our MISSION
is to enable your
doctor to provide
you with the best
and most appro-
priate nutritional
supplements.

Q] What are the hazards of Mercury?

A] Mercury is a highly reactive heavy metal with no known beneficial physiologic activity. Exposure to toxic levels of mercury results in neurologic and kidney damage, but the consequences of long-term exposure to low levels of mercury are poorly understood. Mercury may predispose people to atherosclerotic disease by promoting the production of free radicals or by inactivating several antioxidant mechanisms. Fish intake is a major source of exposure to mercury, mainly in the form of methylmercury. It has been suggested that mercury may counteract the beneficial cardiovascular effects of omega-3 fatty acids in fish

Q] Are all fish oil supplements the same?

A] No. Be careful, not all fish oil supplements are created equal. Fish oil supplements vary widely in amounts and ratios of EPA and DHA. You must pay close attention to the amount of EPA and DHA per capsule. The goal is to have 1 gram of combined EPA/DHA provided in a daily serving; that can vary from 2 to 4 capsules. The EPA/DHA ratios also vary; the optimal ratio has not been rigorously examined. The other big concern in getting your omega-3s, of course, is the issue of mercury, other heavy metals, and organic pollutants. Once again, the source of the fish oil is important; small ocean fish are optimal, and further efforts to purify oils through the scientific processes of molecular distillation and winterization can enhance purity and safety. The addition of small amounts of vitamin E is desirable to prevent oxidation of fatty acids.

Q] When should fish oil supplements be taken?

A] Fish oil supplements can be taken at any time, with or without meals. As the fish oil capsules dissolve in the stomach, many people experience a fishy burp. Keeping the capsules in the freezer and taking them at bedtime can minimize or even eliminate this problem.

Did you know....?

- You can increase your "good" HDL cholesterol up to 20 percent by losing weight; up to 30 percent by becoming more physically active.
- A recent study found that too much antioxidant supplementation can be as bad for you as too little. Specialized blood testing can guide the use of these supplements on an individual basis... Look for our next issue of VitalNews to address this important topic.



To learn more about our products please ask your physician, or visit our website at www.vitalremedymd.com.

AntioxidantBalance® • Daily2Tab • DailyMultiple • HomocysteineFormula
JointFormula • N-AcetylCysteine • PureCalcium • StatinGuard® • VitalOils™