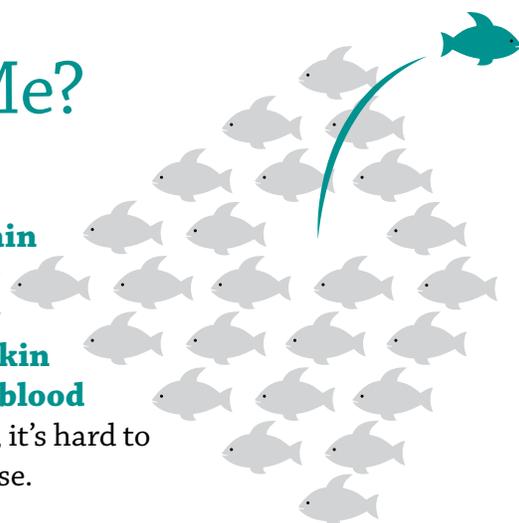


Omega-3

Which One for Me?

by Margy Squires

You know that getting enough omega-3 is good. **Good for your brain** since neurons are surrounded by a fatty lipid and actually need healthy fats. **Good for your aches and pains** as a natural anti-inflammatory agent to reduce the triggers that cause inflammation. **Good for dry skin and eyes** (think of it as an inside lube job). **Good for your heart and blood vessels.** In fact when you add up all the body parts omega-3 is good for, it's hard to find a reason not to take it! Now choose the right one for your daily dose.



Omega-3 is a broad umbrella term for a group of beneficial long-chained fatty acids. These acids are deemed essential since your body does not make enough and they must be gleaned from diet. An estimated 80% of Americans are low in omega-3! So where do you get them?

The most well-known and researched source is from fish oil, namely DHA (Docosahexaenoic Acid) and EPA (Eicosapentaenoic Acid). More than 14,000 studies – 8,000 on humans – boast of omega-3's benefits for cognition and learning, mobility, age-related visual loss and anti-inflammatory activity. Krill oil is the newcomer, with the latest research suggesting it is more bioavailable as omega-3 levels rise faster and sustain longer than fish-derived omega-3. For vegans, flaxseed oil is an alternative but as a short-chained fatty acid, it must be converted into DHA and EPA in the body. No matter which source you choose under the omega-3 umbrella, get covered!

You need to know a few more facts before you buy. Fish, krill or flaxseed oil have to be carefully selected. It's no secret that many of our oceans are contaminated with pesticides, mercury or worse. Plants suffer from pesticide residue and/or are processed so harshly as to destroy delicate oils such that very little health-giving nutrients remain. Look specifically for *molecularly distilled* fish oils, krill that is *sustainably harvested* and *cold-pressed* flaxseed oil. Doing so will ensure you do get the benefits without any "side effects" of undesirable chemicals. This information is found on the product label. Why? So smart consumers will choose the right omega-3 based on what is and what isn't in the supplement bottle. Do you know the answers to these questions?

EPA/DHA Amounts

(Per 1000 mg Serving Size)

	EPA	DHA	ALA
Omega-3 (Fish) CODE 149	180 mg	120 mg	--
Omega-3 ES™ (Fish) CODE 180	500 mg	250 mg	--
Flaxseed Oil CODE 103	--	--	550 mg
Krill Oil (Phospholipid-Bound) CODE 423	120 mg	70 mg	--

Does the ratio of DHA/EPA matter?

Yes. In fish the natural ratio is 1.5:1 EPA to DHA; a ratio that is duplicated in supplements. For example, if DHA is 240 mg, the EPA content will be 1.5 times greater or 360 mg. Since the chemical structure of DHA and EPA are similar, they compete for absorption and utilization. Their function differs, though. DHA is found more abundantly in cells and tissues (especially the retina and brain) while EPA may play a bigger role in reducing inflammation and is quickly used up, demanding a higher supply. Also some EPA converts to DHA so sometimes more than 1.5 times the DHA is beneficial. Based on the buzz of DHA for brain health, some over consume DHA but doing so "blocks" the use of EPA. So keep your omega-3s balanced. If the amounts of DHA/EPA are not listed on the label, put the bottle back on the store shelf!

What is molecular distillation?

It is a particular technique used when processing fish oils that guarantees a high purity of EPA/DHA by minimizing the presence of impurities. If you are going to supplement daily, think of the accumulated benefit of fish oils without the accumulated toxic effects – contaminants such as mercury for one, and polychlorinated biphenyls or PCBs, classified as possible human

Continued

Omega-3, Which One for Me? *continued*

carcinogens by the Environmental Protection Agency. When you choose a GMP manufactured fish oil supplement that is molecularly distilled, you are buying a product specifically tested and guaranteed safe of these impurities.

What about flaxseed oil?

Flaxseeds are about 50% alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) and is an indirect source of DHA/EPA. To be converted to DHA or EPA requires other nutrients such as vitamin B3, vitamin B6, vitamin C, zinc, and magnesium, easily supplied in a multi-vitamin. However, you'll need 9-11 softgels or a tablespoon of oil as a starting point to supplement adequately. Thus, many people opt for the direct source of fish or krill oil. Again, choose cold-pressed flaxseed oil which preserves the fragile ALA.



Fish oil or Krill oil?

Many experts recommend krill over fish for two very important reasons. Besides its ability to raise omega-3 levels faster, krill oil 1) needs lower dosing to accomplish beneficial levels and 2) contains astaxanthin, a powerful antioxidant from the carotenoid family that adds its own health-promoting clout for brain, eyes, skin, joints, fatigue and inflammation. Again, check the label as astaxanthin amounts vary. Finally, phospholipid bound krill is absorbed 2½ times better as it is both water and oil soluble, which also means no fish “after burp”.



Summary

How much to take? Optimally, 1000 mg a day of EPA/DHA is suggested for good health. Other conditions may warrant a higher dose. Remember that omega-3s have slight blood thinning properties that may enhance prescriptions taken to thin blood or blood pressure medications so check with your doctor for your optimal dosing. Store your oils in a cool place away from heat and light. Once open, store in the fridge. So, whether you choose fish, flax or krill, you're now prepared to supplement wisely. Reading the labels will ensure you get the many benefits omega-3s can offer you.

OMEGA-3 DOSE GUIDE*



Source	Daily	Therapeutic
Fish	1,000 mg	>1,000 – 5,000 mg
Flaxseed	1,000 mg	>1,000 – 10,000 mg
Krill	500-1,000 mg	>1,000 – 2,500 mg

**For informational purposes only.*

OMEGA-3 & HEALTH

Omega-3 has been shown to help these conditions:

- ◆ Alzheimer's
- ◆ Angina
- ◆ Anti-Aging/Telomeres
- ◆ Asthma
- ◆ Atherosclerosis
- ◆ Attention Deficit Disorder
- ◆ Cancer
- ◆ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (SEID)
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Diabetes
- ◆ Endometriosis
- ◆ Fibromyalgia
- ◆ Gallstones
- ◆ Glaucoma & ARMD
- ◆ Hypertension
- ◆ Inflammatory Bowel Disease (Crohn's, IBS)
- ◆ Menopause
- ◆ Multiple Sclerosis
- ◆ Myocardial Infarction
- ◆ Osteoarthritis
- ◆ Osteoporosis
- ◆ Psoriasis
- ◆ Rheumatoid Arthritis

Source: *The Clinical Handbook of Natural Medicine, 2nd Edition & Fibromyalgia, Up Close & Personal, 2nd Edit.*

Resources:

1. Daniels S. Interview: The Inventor of Omega-3. www.foodnetwork.com
2. Maroon J & Bost J. *Fish Oil, The Natural Anti-Inflammatory*. Basic Health Publications, 2006.
3. Schuchardt J et al. Incorporation of EPA and DHA into plasma phospholipids in response to different omega-3 fatty acid formulations (fish vs. krill oil). *Lipids Health Dis* 2011 Aug 22; 10:145.
4. Squires M. *Omega-3 Fish Oils, If Only I had a Brain*. www.e-tyh.com/Health Library
5. Pizzorno J, Murray M & Joiner-Bey H. *The Clinician's Handbook of Natural Medicine, 2nd Edit.* Elsevier 2008.

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