

Omega 3 Fatty Acids

Omega 3 Fatty Acids are the “good fat” that is lacking in most American diets today. Omegas 3 Fatty Acids are considered “essential” because the body cannot produce them on its own. Studies are now proving that Omega 3 Fatty Acids help prevent irregular heart beat, reduce plaque build up in the arteries, decrease blood clotting, triglycerides (blood fat), blood pressure and inflammation. Newer studies have even shown that Omega 3 Fatty Acids are now reducing the risk of certain illnesses, such as diabetes, enhance bone density, inhibit proliferation of cancer cells and even improve skin conditions (such as Eczema and Psoriasis). Omega 3 Fatty Acids may even stimulate serotonin and dopamine, reducing depression in certain individuals. The daily requirement for Omega 3 Fatty Acids is 1.1 grams for women and 1.6 grams for men. The two most potent forms of Omega 3 Fatty Acids is DHA and EPA, which are vital nutrients and are converted into hormone-like substances to regulate cell activity and healthy cardiovascular function.

What food source contains Omega 3 Fatty Acids?

Oily cold-water fish (such as Salmon, Mackerel and Tuna as well as Seaweed) are the best sources for Omega 3 Fatty Acids. Plant sources (such as Flaxseed oil, Canola oil, Walnuts and certain vegetables) also contain some forms of Omega 3 Fatty Acids but not enough. Some stores even carry Omega 3 enhanced meat, which means that the animals were fed a diet high in Omega 3's such as algae, flaxseeds and fish. The most valuable source of Omega 3 Fatty Acids is found in fish. How much fish is enough? 500–1,000 milligrams per day is the daily fish requirement and the American Heart Association recommends all adults eat a variety of fish 2-3 times per week. Never consume more than 3,000 milligrams. Over-consumption of Omega 3 Fatty Acids may reduce the immune response as well as slight risk of hemorrhagic stroke or excessive bleeding. Large doses must be taken only under a doctor's supervision.

Pregnancy and Omega 3 Fatty Acids

Pregnant women need more Omega 3 Fatty Acids to nourish the developing fetus and baby after delivery. If a woman consumes too few Omega 3 Fatty Acids, she risks post-partum depression and the fetus takes all the supply she has. Women may then run the risk of pre-eclampsia or toxemia, which complicates the pregnancy in 5-10% of mothers. Pre-eclampsia may lead to maternal mortality, preterm delivery, fetal retardation and perinatal mortality.

Consuming Omega 3 Fatty Acids during pregnancy may be difficult, due to the fact that women shouldn't consume too much fish, due to high mercury levels found. Researchers are finding easier ways of consumption, such as taking a vitamin supplementation or fish oil capsules. Some pre-natal vitamins now even carry Omega 3 Fatty Acids. Some Omega 3 Fatty Acids are now even available in infant formulas.