

Fish Oil and Heart Disease Prevention

Why are fish oils healthy?

Fish oils contain two main omega-3 fatty acids called EPA (eicosapentanoic acid) and DHA (docosahexanoic acid). EPA and DHA have been shown to reduce the risk of sudden death after a heart attack, and populations eating a diet high in fish have fewer heart attacks. Fish oil may reduce the tendency for blood to clot as well as the risk of irregular heartbeats (arrhythmias). Fish oils at high doses may also lower triglycerides. Flax seed also contains omega-3 fatty acids but have not been tested as extensively as marine oils.

What are some recommendations for healthy people and those with heart disease?

- Food: Consume 2 servings (7-8 oz.) of fish each week. All fish are naturally low in saturated fat, and many are rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids include anchovies, bluefish, carp, catfish, halibut, herring, lake trout, mackerel, pompano, salmon, striped sea bass, tuna and whitefish. Fried fish do not have the same value. For safety recommendations see <http://www.mdmh.state.mi.us/pha/fish/FishAdvisory.pdf> or <http://www.mbayaq.org/cr/seafoodwatch.asp>.
- Supplement: 820 - 1000 mg omega-3 fatty acids (EPA and DHA) per day to protect against cardiac death in persons who have had a heart attack. The most common side effects are fishy smelling burps, nausea and diarrhea. Try storing the pills in the freezer and use without thawing to reduce these effects. Increased bleeding or bruising may occur when using EPA supplements and aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and herbs such as garlic and ginkgo.
 - Dosing: Supplements contain different amounts of DHA and EPA (see back). If possible, choose one with at least 500 mg of DHA + EPA per pill. Increase dose gradually to reduce side effects. Start by

taking one capsule per day with meals for 4 days. Then increase to 2 capsules per day with meals.

What is the quality of fish oil supplements?

Other than the prescription brand, Lovazo[®], these products are not federally regulated to the standards of medications. When 41 brands were evaluated by consumerlab.com, one product contained less EPA than stated on the product label. None were found to contain detectable levels of mercury or showed evidence of significant decomposition. None of the products contained unsafe levels of PCBs. Small amounts of vitamin E or other antioxidants are added to prevent the fish oils from becoming rancid. **We do not endorse any specific product.** Samples of products described on the reverse side contain sufficient amounts of EPA and DHA and have been tested by consumerlab.com or usp.org. There are many other products which may or may not be of equal quality.

EPA & DHA Products tested for accuracy in quantity of EPA and DHA a lack of contaminants by consumerlab.com or USP.com

Manufacturer	Product Name	EPA (mg)	DHA (mg)	Available at/ price/ amount (Aug. 2006)
Dist. by Advocare [®] international (2 soft gels)	Advocare [®] OMEGAPLEX [®] Omega-3 Fatty Acid	300	200	www.advocare.com/ \$12.95/ 90
Dist. by Allergy Research Group (1 soft gel)	Allergy Research Group [®] Super Fish Oil Concentrate	360	240	Vitamin Shoppe/ \$18.70/ 60
Dist. by Carlson Div. of J.R. Carlson (1 soft gel)	Carlson [®] Super Omega-3 Fish Oils 1000mg	300	200	Arbor Farms/ \$25.49/ 130 Vitamin Shoppe/ \$25.50/ 60
Dist. by ERBL, Inc (1 packet)	Coromega [™] Omega-3 Fish Oil (orange	350	230	Target/ \$16.99/ 90

	flavor)			
Mfd. by Nordic Naturals Inc. (2 soft gels)	Nordic Naturals Ultimate™ Omega, Lemon Taste	325	225	The Vitamin Shoppe/ \$26.95/ 60 Arbor Farms/ \$24.95/ 120 Whole Foods/ \$15.99/ 60
MFD. by Reliant Pharmaceuticals, Inc (4 capsules)	Lovaza (Omega-3 Acid Ethyl Esters)	465	375	Prescription Only/ \$140.00 a month
Dist. by Omega Natural Health (10 day supply)	Omegabrite™ 100% Natural Advanced Omega 3 Formula, 500 mg	375	55	www.omegabrite .com /\$20.99/ 60
Mfd. by Solgar Vitamin and Herb (1 soft gel)	Solgar Omega-3 “700” EPA & DHA from Cold Water Fish (700 mg fish oil)	360	240	Arbor Farms/ \$42.69/ 120 Vitamin Shoppe/ \$42.70/ 120
Mfd. by Vitamin World (1 soft gel)	Vitamin World® Naturally Inspired™ Super EPA Natural Fish Oil 1000mg	300	200	www.Vitaminworld .com/ \$11.90/ 90
Mfd. for The Vitamin Shoppe™ (1 soft gel)	The Vitamin Shoppe EPA-DHA Omega-3 Fish Oil 500 (1000 mg fish oil)	300	200	The Vitamin Shoppe/ \$15.99/ 100
Dist. by Trader Joe’s (1 soft gel)	Trader Darwin’s™ Molecularly Distilled Omega-3 Fatty Acids	300	200	Trader Joe’s/ \$7.99/ 90

	Dietary Supplement (1100 mg fish oil)			
Dist. by J.R. Carlson Laboratories, Inc. (1 teaspoon)	Carlson® Norwegian Cod Liver Oil	460-500	500-550	The Vitamin Shoppe/ \$34.90/ 16.8 Whole Foods/ \$28.99/16.8
Dist. by Nature Made Nutritional Products (2 soft gels)	Nature Made Maximum Strength Omega-3 Fish Oil 1200 mg	432	288	Kroger/ \$7.99/ 100 Walgreens/ \$8.99/ 60
Dist. by Metagenics, Inc. (2 capsules)	EPA-DHA Extra Strength™	600	400	Castle Remedies/ \$21.75/ 60

Notes:

- Fish oil should be taken under a physician’s care by people with hemophilia, people taking prescription blood thinners (Coumadin/warfarin, heparin), and people expecting to undergo surgery.
- Rare interactions may occur between EPA supplements and aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and herbs such as garlic and ginkgo.

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