

Your Health Is At Risk With Out DHA from Fish In Your Diet

DHA is the most abundant essential fatty acid (polyunsaturated fatty acids) found in the brain and retina. DHA is essential for the proper functioning of our brains as adults, and for the development of our nervous system and visual abilities during the first 6 months of life. DHA is found in cold water fatty fish, including salmon, tuna (blue fin tuna have up to five times more DHA than other types of tuna), mackerel, sardines, shellfish, and herring. Lets take a look at what DHA can do for you.

DHA makes infant formulas more like human milk than "conventional" formula containing Alpha-linolenic acid and linoleic acid, which are precursors to DHA. It has been an ingredient in several brands of premium infant formula sold in North America since 2001. Mead Johnson was the first infant formula manufacturer to add DHA and ARA (arachidonic acid) to its Enfamil Lipil product, several other manufacturers have followed. DHA levels in breast milk are higher if a mother's diet is high in fish.

DHA is also present normally in very high concentrations in the retina. DHA supplementation would be particularly important for mothers who have consumed excessive alcohol, because alcohol inhibits the desaturase enzymes necessary for DHA synthesis. Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA) is a type of Omega-3 fatty acid, a nutrient that has been studied for its role in heart, brain and eye health. An experiment that studied the individual effects of EPA and DHA found that EPA reduced natural killer (NK) cell activity and cell-mediated immune response, but that DHA does not so this study concluded that the immune-suppressing effects of fish oil are mainly due to EPA, not DHA.

Omega-3 fatty acids found in fish oil help lower triglycerides (fats in the blood), lower blood pressure, reduce the risk of blood clots, improve the health of arteries and reduce the amount of arterial plaque (which narrows arteries and causes heart disease). Many people believe that excessively high omega-6 rather than omega-3 in the modern diet is responsible for an increase in allergies and the need to take aspirin to reduce the risk of heart attack (myocardial infarction).

Sunflower, safflower and corn oil are particularly rich sources of linoleic acid, which is at the root of the omega-6 fatty-acid family. The ability of enzymes to produce the omega-6 and omega-3 family of products of linoleic and alpha-linolenic acid declines with age this is why we need more omega 3 DHA in our diets. In fact, a high omega-3 fatty acid diet increases the alpha-tocopherol content of heart muscle membranes by five times, and this effect is most prominently associated with DHA because the heart muscle prefers DHA as its raw materials to manufacture and strengthen its membranes.

Dietary DHA may reduce the risk of heart disease by reducing the level of blood triglycerides in humans. Low levels of DHA result in reduction of brain serotonin levels and have been associated with ADHD, Alzheimer's disease, and depression, among other diseases, and there is mounting evidence that DHA supplementation may be effective in combating inflammatory bowel disease as well.

Dietary changes in the past century have lowered the consumption of omega-3 to a state of subclinical deficiency that is epidemiologically related to cardiovascular disease, inflammatory disorders, mental and psychiatric diseases and suboptimal neurodevelopment. Decreases in DHA in the brain are associated with cognitive decline during aging and with onset of sporadic Alzheimer disease. DHA has a positive effect on diseases such as hypertension, arthritis, atherosclerosis,, adult-onset diabetes, mellitus, thrombosis, and some cancers.

In conclusion, if consuming DHA through your diet is impossible, you can purchase DHA as a supplement in two common forms: Fish oil capsules or DHA extracted from algae. Consuming DHA may help support body tissues in which DHA is prevalent — especially the brain, nervous system, heart, retinas, and colon. Staying healthy is important, have you had your DHA today?

About the Author

More information on [Docosahexaenoic Acid DHA](#) is available at VitaNet ®, LLC Health Food store. <http://vitanetonline.com/>

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