

# Fish Oil Supplements

Fish oil (omega 3 fatty acids - EPA + DHA) may reduce your risk for cardiovascular disease by reducing heart rhythm problems after a heart attack, decreasing blood clots in the arteries of your heart, lowering triglycerides, slowing growth of plaque in arteries, increasing artery relaxation and lowering blood pressure.

Fish oil (omega 3 fatty acids - EPA + DHA) together with statin therapy have been shown to significantly lower risk of major coronary (heart related) events compared with statin therapy alone in patients with artery disease.

## The American Heart Association recommends:

Persons without documented artery disease eat a variety of (preferably oily) fish at least twice a week. Include oils and foods rich in a-linolenic acid (flaxseed, canola, and soybean oils; flaxseed and walnuts)

Persons with documented artery disease consume approximately 1,000 mg of EPA+DHA per day, preferably from oily fish. EPA +DHA supplements could be considered in consultation with a physician.

Persons with high triglycerides should take 2,000 - 4,000 mg of EPA+DHA per day provided as capsules under a physician's care.

- Over the counter preparations contain varying amounts of EPA + DHA in each capsule. This means that you may need to take as many as 2-20 capsules daily.
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- If you buy over the counter fish oil or omega 3 fatty acid supplements read the label carefully to find out how much EPA+ DHA is in each capsule. Often, the label will list the fish oil content by "serving size" which may be 2 or more capsules.
- **The amount of Fish Oil Concentrate is not the same as the amount of EPA and DHA.**
- **Lovaza**, a fish oil preparation available by prescription, contains 456 mg of EPA and 375 mg of DHA per capsule.
- Fish oil supplements have no significant amount of mercury content.

The dose range used in two large human prospective trials showing cardiac event rate reduction was:

- 850 to 1800 mg of EPA+DHA.