

Essential Fats For Healthy Body... Healthy Mind... Healthy Emotions...

Early signs of EFA deficiency:

fatigue • poor memory • dry skin
heart problems • hair loss • eczema
reproductive problems • depression
mood swings • immune weakness



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Essential fatty acids (EFA's) are nutrients of vital importance that must be obtained from the diet since humans cannot make them. Two groups are essential: the **omega 6** series and the **omega 3** series. Omega 6 EFA's are prominent in the Western diet and the ratio to Omega 3 EFA's may be as high as 15:1 as compared to the normal range of 3:1. This is a result of our fat phobic society since the 1980's and the move from eating meat to eating more carbohydrates loaded with omega 6 and trans fatty acids.

Omega 3 EFA's are the GOOD fats that EVERYONE young and old alike should have in their daily dietary program. This is because every cell membrane in your body is composed of EFA's and crucial for its proper function. They are found in fishoils, flaxseeds and hemp seeds.

What are Trans Fats? These are "bad" fats found in some margarines, vegetable shortenings, baked products, dressings and usually found in many processed foods. Look for "shortening" "hydrogenated oil" or "partially hydrogenated vegetable oil" on the label. These, along with other bad fats found in saturated and monounsaturated fats, increase the need for EFA's. They are bad because their "trans" figuration make cell membranes through the body dysfunctional. Over the years with too much ingestion of trans fats and saturated fats found in red meat, and rancid nutrient poor omega 6 fats, everyone needs an OIL change of their cell membranes.

Omega 6 Fats such as found in sunflower, canola, safflower and corn oil are common in the Western diet. In fact too many omega 6 fats in relation to omega 3 EFA's are eaten creating an imbalance predisposing the body to inflammation. Inflammation promotes the cause of cardiovascular disease, cancer, and auto-immune diseases. The production of these oils is questionable. Genetically modified (GM) crops are often used which are not organic and therefore laced with pesticides.

These oils, **if** properly processed and NON GM, should be kept in dark bottles and protected from light and oxygen, stored in the refrigerator and taste like the seed it comes from. The **Flora** brand makes many of these oils in their healthiest form. The exception to these over abundant omega 6 EFA's is GLA (gamma-linolenic acid) found in borage oil and evening primrose oil. These have anti-inflammatory effects similar to the omega 3 EFA's found in fish oil. The best cooking oil is **extra virgin olive oil**.

Omega 3 fats I recommend are: **Flora Flaxoil** blends or **purified** fish oils. The best brands of fish oils include: **Nordic Naturals, Nutra Sea (Herring Oil) by Ascenta, and Carlson's Cod (Arctic Cod) liver oils**. All others I question their care at making sure the oils are free from contaminants such as **PCB's, mercury, fire retardants and dioxins**. The oil should NOT taste fishy. If so, it is rancid. Some folks complain the oils are burping back on them. This may be due to liver or gallbladder imbalances. Naturopathic physicians will address the imbalance as well as recommend that the **oils be taken with food**, perhaps not with breakfast but lunch or dinner, and be taken in the **frozen** pill form. (This slows the digestion through the stomach and helps with this symptom.)

Obtaining **contaminant free** fish oils from the diet is challenging. The Western diet is low in fish and eating fish while pregnant is now discouraged by the FDA due its high content of contaminants that easily cross the placental barrier. Eating fish is not without its risk, so if you eat a lot of fish take **ProAlgen** around the fish meal to absorb the heavy metals and allow their excretion through the bile before they are absorbed through intestinal tract. Other greens such as chlorella, cilantro, barley green or spirulina may work as well. Take directly before and after any fish meal.

Fish Oil or Flax Oil? The ALA (Alpha Linolenic Acid) found in flaxoil does not convert that quickly into the much needed EPA (Eicosapentaenoic Acid) and DHA (Docosahexaenoic Acid).

What is EPA? EPA essential fats are beneficial for many **auto-immune and inflammatory disorders, including arthritis, asthma, inflammatory bowel disease, systemic lupus erythematosus and psoriasis.** Both EPA and DHA reduce the risk of **cardiac arrest, ischemic stroke, arrhythmias, and lower blood pressure.** They **lower triglycerides** and make **platelets less sticky.** In fact the evidence is so strong that the American Heart Association has stated that “people who have elevated triglycerides may need two to four grams of EPA and DHA per day provided as a supplement”. EPA’s improve symptoms of **schizophrenia, depression,** and increased remission of **bipolar disorder.** EPA prevents **diabetes** and enhances insulin secretion and glucose metabolism.

What is DHA? This omega 3 fat protects against the harmful effects of stress. DHA reduces elevations in **aggression and hostility, antisocial behaviors** and helps protect against the increased risk of **heart attack** associated with stress and **depression.** DHA improves **cognition** in Alzheimer’s Disease and promotes proper growth and development of the **brain, eyes, nervous system** and cell membranes of children. **Autistic** children have a marked reduction of DHA levels in the plasma compared with mentally retarded controls. When taken during pregnancy research indicates lower risk for **low birth weight and premature births, Type 1 diabetes and postpartum depression.**

Children whose mothers had taken cod liver oil during pregnancy and lactation had **higher IQ’s** at age four. DHA also reduces ocular pressure associated with **glaucoma.**

What is GLA? This is a type of omega 6 essential fat that may be deficient in most diets. It is found in **evening primrose oil and borage oil** and has anti-inflammatory effects similar to EPA for the treatment of arthritis, premenstrual syndrome, breast pain, inflammatory bowel disease and skin disorders such as eczema and psoriasis.

Cancer Prevention. EPA suppresses cell proliferation and DHA induces programmed cell death (apoptosis) of cancer cells. EPA and DHA suppress breast and colon cancer growth and metastasis.

Migraine Headaches: Omega 3 EFA’s can help reduce the frequency, length and severity of migraine headaches.

Hostile Attitudes lead to heightened risk of developing heart disease and when young adult prisoners were supplemented with fish oil they were less violent.

ADHD patients may suffer from altered fatty acid metabolism resulting in lower concentrations of EPA and DHA.

Vitamin D: Growing research indicates that vitamin D is crucial as an anti-inflammatory and for cancer prevention. The RDA of 400 IU’s per day is much too low, 2000IU’s is preferred. One tablespoon of Carlson’s Cod Liver oil provides 1500IU’s of Vitamin D.

Other nutrients required for optimal EFA metabolism include: zinc, vitamin C, B6, magnesium, calcium and adequate protein intake.

Dosage: 1 tablespoon of **Carlson’s cod liver oil** provides 1500mg EPA, 1650mg DHA, 7500IU’s Vitamin A and 1500IU’s vitamin D. Take between October and April. 1 tablespoon of **Nutra Sea Herring oil** provides 2325mg EPA, 1500mg DHA and no vitamin A or D, thus its use is recommended from May until September. **Flaxoil** provides 300mg total of EPA and DHA, 7650mg ALA and 2100mg linoleic acid. All of the above oils are provided in capsule form but require between 11 and 15 capsules to equal one tablespoon of oil.

Interactions with Prescription Drugs:

The need for anti-inflammatories and steroids may be **decreased** with EFA’s. The effects of some anticancer drugs such as Tamoxifen, Doxorubicin and Paclitaxel are **enhanced** with EFA’s. The need for vitamin E may **increase** with intake of unsaturated fatty acids and EFA’s. Anti-thrombotic therapy may be **enhanced** with EFA’s so monitoring of INR’s is important.

Balance is the key. EFA in the form of EPA and DHA found in fish oils should be balanced with EFA’s found in flaxoil, borage oil and evening primrose oil. I suggest taking 1 tbsp per day of Udo’s Omega 3,6,9 blend one month out of every three and 1 tbsp of Cod or Herring oil the other two months. (one teaspoon per day for children).

Over fishing: The fish that are not endangered or over fished include arctic cod, anchovies, herring, mackerel and sardines.