



Dr. Robert Jay Rowen's

SECOND OPINION

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Do You Really Need Fish Oils?

For years, I've been a big advocate of fish oil. The studies seemed to show that taking fish oil brings a host of great health benefits. However, in recent years, my enthusiasm about it has waned. It started when I began eating the Living Foods diet. I didn't want to put animal products in my body.

But my diet was largely due to spiritual beliefs. I still couldn't deny the conclusions of so many studies. Medically, I had to admit that fish oil was an important part of staying healthy. The studies were so convincing that even the drug companies couldn't deny their benefits. So, instead of fighting the trend, they joined it. Now you can buy fish oil by prescription for \$180 — and it's exactly the same as most fish oils sold over-the-counter for \$30.

Naturally, that made me a little suspicious. So I started doing more research into fish oil. What I've discovered in recent years — and will tell you about this month — will blow the lid off all the hype surrounding fish oil.

What I'm going to show you this month could encourage many of you to give up fish oil altogether. But for most of you, this report will show you how to get the absolute best health benefits from fatty acids. I'll show you how certain fish oils are still good to take. And I'll give you a secret way to make fatty acids even more effective. Here's a hint: It doesn't involve taking higher doses of Big Pharma's expensive fish oil. In fact, it could save you a lot of money.

Let me start by saying that the impact of fatty acids on your health is impossible to overstate. There's a reason all those studies showed great benefits from fatty acids. They are essential for your body to function at its optimum level.

What most people don't realize is that not all fatty acids are created equal. There are several different types of fatty acids. The chemical structure of fatty acids is a chain of carbon atoms with an organic acid group at the end. Fatty acids differ by the length of this chain and the degree of saturation of the chain's carbon atoms with hydrogen atoms.

Fatty acids come in the form of "ester." An ester is a chemical combination of an organic alcohol to an organic acid. For instance, triglycerides are a tri-ester. They have three fatty acids connected to a glycerol (glycerol is a three-carbon alcohol) backbone. All natural oils are in this triglyceride form. This tri-ester is the way your body carries the fatty acids.

Structural variations cause fatty acids to have different reactions in your body. For instance, an unsaturated fat is missing two hydrogen atoms (thus it's "unsaturated").

A polyunsaturated fatty acid (PUFA) has more than one double bond in its chain. This structure makes PUFAs more susceptible to damage from heat and oxygen exposure.

Most fat, including PUFAs, are actually combusted for energy or used for cell membrane structure. Our bodies can make most fatty acids it needs for these purposes. However, it cannot make what we call "essential" omega fats. Unfortunately, there's a lot of misinformation in the marketplace about essential fatty acids. And the fish oil you're taking may not be real "essential" fatty acids. Here's why.

There are only two true essential fatty acids. These are linoleic acid (LA), of the omega-6 series, and alpha linolenic acid (ALA), of the omega-3 series. These are the only two essential fats your body demands from your diet. My friend Brian Peskin, PhD calls these two fats "parent essential oils" or PEOs. When you consume these PEOs, about 95% of them stay in the parent form. But your body changes about 5% of them into other biochemicals. We call these "derivatives." They include the omega-3s EPA and DHA of fish oil.

Most of the fish oils sold today are not the essential parent omega-6 and omega-3 oils. Rather, most of them are these nonessential derivatives. They are not "essential" oils at all. Your body can make them as they're needed. The conversion is slow, but that is how God intended it. But the sellers advertise them as "essential" when, in fact, they're really derivatives.

That doesn't mean the derivatives are bad. It just means you're not getting the best health benefits possible. Here's why.

Taking derivatives in excess forces your body to use them as they are, even if it doesn't need them. But it can convert "parent" polyunsaturated fatty acids into

long-chain fatty acid derivatives as needed. I've told you about long-chain fatty acids in the past. They are fatty acids that have 20 or more carbons in their structure, and with three or more double bonds. "Parent" PUFAs, by comparison, are 18 carbons long.

Long-chain fatty acids are absolutely critical precursors of both pro and anti-inflammatory mediators, blood vessel lubrication, hormones (prostaglandins), and more. There is the omega-6 series of long-chain fatty acids. You'll find these in high concentrations in your skin and nervous system. Amazingly, your skin has nearly 1,000 times more omega 6 in it than omega-3. Most tissues, in fact, have far more parent omega-6 than omega-3 in them. (In contrast, omega-3 is scarce in these tissues and relatively more abundant in organs and muscles.)

Omega-6 fatty acids often get a bad rap for being pro-inflammatory. While they can cause inflammation, they are more often anti-inflammatory. When they do become pro-inflammatory, omega-3s soften these inflammatory pathways. This helps balance the negative effects of the omega-6 inflammatory pathways.

What most physicians overlook, though, is the fact that the body's most potent anti-inflammatory compound (PGE1) comes from the omega-6 series. And, your body's most potent vascular lubricator (prostacyclin) also is a derivative of omega-6.

So omega-6s are not the evil fatty acids most people make them out to be. But they do need adequate omega-3 fatty acids to keep them in check.

The best omega-3 is "parent" 18-carbon chain ALA from plants. I've told you a lot about the wonderful health benefits of ALA. You can find it in abundance in hemp, flax, chia and walnuts.

When you eat parent essential oils in your diet — or take PEO supplements — you're giving your body essential fatty acids it can't create on its own. If you don't consume PEOs, you won't get all the raw materials your body really needs to stay healthy. Taking the vast majority of fish oils just doesn't give you all that you need. But don't the studies suggest they do give great health benefits? The answer is yes and no.

I can't deny that fish oil is beneficial for a number of conditions. Studies suggest that fish oil reduces blood triglycerides, heart attacks, heart rhythm disturbances, and increases the breakdown of fibrin (clotting material) in your blood. I've reported that fish oils might help lift depression. Other research has connected fish oil to a lower cancer and vascular risk.

However, an excellent *JAMA* review article in 2008 concluded omega-3 intake provides little prevention of cancer risk. *Circulation* (7-22-00) reported that omega-3 intake does provide vascular prevention. But the beauty of this study

was differentiating between fish omega-3 and "parent" plant omega-3. The parent omega-3 trumped omega-3 intake from fish. It provided benefits the fish oil did not offer.

Additional studies have shown a decrease in cardiovascular and total mortality with consuming fish or fish oil supplements regularly. A 2007 Japanese study followed 60 patients with impaired blood sugar. The researchers found that 1,800 mg daily of EPA from fish reduced the thickness of their carotid arteries and improved their blood flow.

Another study found that 4 grams daily of fish oil could lower triglycerides up to 45% in those whose triglycerides were over 500 mg/dl at outset.

And another study looked at 18,000 patients with unhealthy cholesterol levels. The researchers gave all of the patients a statin. But they gave half of the participants 1,800 mg of fish oil. The additional marine oil did significantly improve their outcomes. So it seems like fish oil does have a positive impact.

Fish oil protects mice from laboratory-induced neurodegenerative conditions, such as Parkinson's. However, human studies did not show any improvement in cognitive function in normal seniors. In psychiatric patients, fish oils appear to have benefit. However, the studies show that the effects are highly variable from study to study. So we can't draw any absolute conclusions. In macular degeneration, a few studies have found that eating fish or taking fish oil supplements reduces your risk.

In inflammatory conditions in tissues, fish oils may offer significant help. Studies suggest that they will accomplish at least what toxic NSAID drugs will not. And it makes sense. Omega-3s are specific modulators of inflammation. They do nutritionally what the drugs impose chemically.

At a recent ACAM meeting, one doctor arose during the Q&A session to tell the attendees of his experience with fish oils. He developed a serious inflammatory skin condition about 15 years ago. His conventional doctors had no suggestions. He started taking 20 capsules daily of a fish oil that also contained the omega-6 oil GLA. His condition vanished. He tapered down the number of capsules to the lowest number required to prevent recurrences (about four daily). I have similar testimonials from others with inflammatory conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis.

Clearly there are benefits to fish and fish oil for many people. But parent omega-3 may be just as good if not safer for staying healthy! Is fish oil required for a longer life? Not according to the published data I've seen and told you about in these pages. The China Study, for instance, found that any animal protein (fish included) raised the all-cause mortality in proportion to the amount consumed. And of the five longest-living societies on earth, only one diet has regular fish

(Okinawa). The other four societies are the Hunza's in Pakistan, the Vicambamba high in the Andes in Ecuador, the Abhasia of the Caucasus Mountains, and the fully vegetarian 7th Day Adventists (not the non-vegetarian Adventists) here in the U.S.

The secret of the latter four groups is a plant-based diet rich in fruit and vegetables grown on rich soils. Their food is not calorie dense. It is very low in fat. The group populations are slender. Excepting American Adventists, they get exercise laboring in their fields. These groups not only live the longest, but seemingly are the healthiest as well, not experiencing the ravages of degenerative diseases many years before they die like the rest of the Western world.

So the answer for longevity is not simply fish oil. These long-lived populations are not taking fish oil supplements. But they definitely get lots of "parent" omega PUFA from plants.

As you can see, fish oils may help many people. But it's just as clear that they're not required for long life. In next month's issue, I'm going to show you when you may benefit from taking fish oil, when you may not need it at all, and, more importantly, the most effective way to protect your arteries.

How to Protect Your Brain From Stroke Damage

I have simply wonderful news for you about a nutrient I reported on a few years ago. A particular form of vitamin E may offer dramatic protection to your brain cells. And this protection could prevent your brain cells from dying after a stroke.

An Ohio State University research team studied tocotrienols (one of eight forms of vitamin E) for its brain-sparing properties. They found that it affects a key enzyme. And this enzyme leads to brain cell destruction after blood flow is cut off (like it is during a stroke).

When a lack of blood damages brain cells, the damage releases high levels of glutamate. Glutamate is a necessary neurotransmitter. But in high levels, it overexcites and kills brain cells. Glutamate activates the enzyme cytosolic calcium-dependent phospholipase A2 or cPLA2. This enzyme works on the membrane of the brain cells to release free arachidonic acid, which is abundant (but bound) in membranes. When arachidonic acid comes loose and roams free, it can become very toxic under certain circumstances.

The research team studied critical brain cells in rats. When they exposed them to high levels of glutamate, they caused the release of arachidonic acid. Cells died. But when they added tocotrienols, survival of the cells rose almost 400%. And they saw the benefit if they added the tocotrienols either before or after glutamate exposure. It inhibited the enzyme by about 60%.

The most interesting part of this report is that very low levels of tocotrienols were sufficient to protect. This level corresponded to just one-tenth the blood level of tocotrienols found in people who consume the vitamin regularly. The enzyme cPLA2 is ubiquitous in our tissues. But scientists believe that blocking it is not harmful at all. In fact, when they genetically altered mice to block activation of the enzyme, the mice lived a normal life with less risk of stroke.

All integrative physicians know the "dangers" of arachidonic acid. When out of balance, it can, in fact, lead to inflammation and tissue damage. But, arachidonic acid is a two-edged sword. It is an omega-6 fatty acid. It's found in high amounts in meat. One path of arachidonic acid metabolism creates high inflammation. Another path actually reduces it.

When you take omega-3 fatty acids, they modulate the pro-inflammatory processes of arachidonic acid. Now, science confirms that tocotrienols can actually block the release of this acid. Furthermore, previous studies show that it slows lipid peroxidation, which is a cause of the nasty activities of arachidonic acid.

Tocotrienols may be 40-60 times more protective of cell membranes than its cousin alpha tocopherol, the better-known vitamin E. Furthermore, because of its molecular structure, it may excel in one area. It can specifically protect the most critical lipid structures of all in our cells: the membrane around the cell nucleus. That can spare your DNA lots of damage.

Research suggests that the delta fraction of tocotrienols has, by far, the most activity. And, you can get it easily! Advanced Bionutritionals (800-791-3395) carries Delta Tocotrienols. If you visit my website, you'll see many mentions of my recommendations for preventing stroke with a cocktail of supplements for those with atrial fibrillation refusing Coumadin. Well, I still am batting 100% success. No one who takes this cocktail has had a blood clot. And this new research suggests another reason why. However, I am gradually switching stroke-risk patients from standard vitamin E to delta tocotrienols for all these great reasons.

You don't need a lot of tocotrienols to see benefit. Taking just 50 mg a day of the specific delta fraction seems to do the job in cholesterol reduction. If it does, you can reduce the dose accordingly. If not, increase your dose to 50 mg twice daily and recheck. If you're at stroke risk, consider 50 mg one to two times daily, but please consult with your integrative physician to consider all your risks, drugs, and possible interactions.

Ref: Online Journal of Neurochemistry, January 2010; Ohio State University, January 11, 2010.

HEALTH NOTES

Narcotics Make Cancer Grow – Unless You Do This

One of the worst parts about cancer can be excruciating pain. So I've long advocated strong pain management. Unfortunately, some of the strongest pain medications could also be some of the most deadly.

I've clinically noticed for many years, that soon after a cancer patient starts on opiates (like morphine), they decline rapidly. Now science has proven what I've seen clinically. A new study found that morphine increases tumor cell division, inhibits the immune system, and promotes cancer blood vessel growth.

Scientists developed mice that lacked a particular receptor for morphine. They were far more resistant to implanted cancer than controls with normal morphine receptors. Additionally, a drug called methylnaltrexone, used to treat narcotic induced constipation, reduced cancer cell proliferation by 90% in normal mice.

I'm an absolute believer in making a patient in pain comfortable by any means, including narcotics. A physician's mission is to relieve pain and suffering. But I'm often torn, knowing that once starting narcotics, a cancer patient will likely decline more rapidly.

In alternative medicine circles, we use low-dose Naltrexone or LDN. Naltrexone is a narcotic antagonist. In low doses, it temporarily knocks out naturally produced narcotics (endorphins) in your brain. When the Naltrexone wears off, your brain then responds with a burst of endorphins. The endorphins communicate with your white blood cells. Endorphins get them acting like buzz saws. Narcotics inhibit your body's own production of endorphins.

Bert Berkson, MD used and reported that LDN (4.5 mg taken at bedtime) in combination with IV alpha lipoic acid (600 mg twice weekly) remitted cancer. As a result, many alternative physicians use this combination to stimulate anti-cancer immune system activity.

Please don't take this report to deny yourself narcotic comfort. Advanced cancer can cause terrible pain. But, if you're trying to fight the disease, you should know that use of narcotics could further impair your immune system. If you have cancer, you might consider a visit to an alternative doctor to try LDN therapy. It is a very gentle treatment with no known significant toxicity.

Ref: University of Chicago Medical Center, news release, November 18, 2009.

Do Mammograms Increase Your Cancer Risk?

If you are at high risk of getting breast cancer, please reconsider getting mammograms. A new study says the radiation in mammograms can significantly increase your risk of getting breast cancer.

In this study, researchers followed 8,500 women exposed to chest X-rays or mammograms, and who had five or more exposures. The findings were clear. They found that the popular cancer detection method actually increased their risk of getting cancer by 2.5 times.

Of course, the pundits are saying that radiation is well known to increase cancer risk when received at a younger age, but that mammograms don't increase risk for older women. I don't think so. Here's why: I've told you how yearly mammograms for five years detect many more cancers than one mammogram after 5 years — regardless of age. There are only two possible conclusions. Either the cancers come and spontaneously remit, or the frequency of mammograms increases cancer risk. There's just no other conclusion.

Again, I encourage you to get breast thermography if you are at risk. Thermograms measure temperature changes. If your breast tissue is degenerating toward cancer, its temperature will rise in the target area. These changes occur years before cancer finally arises. That's plenty of time to fix the problem.

If mammograms put some women at greater risk, it will put all women at somewhat greater risk. You can't be a little pregnant. Radiation is radiation. Medicine needs to emphasize non-toxic means of detection. But even better, see breastthermography.com. We need to prevent!

Ref: Steenhuisen, Julie, "Mammogram radiation may put some women at risk," Reuters, December 2, 2009.

The Easy Way to Decrease Your Risk of Catching a Cold by 550%

I hate summer colds. The cough, runny nose, sneezing, and sinus headaches seem even worse when it's 90+ degrees outside — especially when I want to be outside enjoying the weather. I've told you how important a good diet and the right supplements are to preventing and treating a cold. But that's not all you need. You need something else — and it's completely FREE!

The prevention? Just plain old sleep. Yes, getting less than seven hours sleep per night can raise your risk of falling ill to a cold by 300%. And, if you just can't fall asleep, or if you awaken in the middle of the night, your chances skyrocket 550%.

This is just a huge effect.

Researchers from Pittsburgh University followed 153 men and women. They actually quarantined them in a hotel and physically dropped cold-causing viruses in the noses of 135 of them. They monitored the participants for five days for signs of colds.

Of those 135, only 54 developed a cold. After adjusting for age, weight, socioeconomic status, perceived stress, smoking and alcohol, the strongest predictors for who would come down with symptoms were how long and how well the subjects slept. Sleep efficiency was the strongest factor. Disturbed sleep (2-8% of the night) could increase the risk by 400%, even if total sleep was seven hours, compared to staying asleep for 99+% of the night.

These studies confirmed earlier findings on the immune response to flu vaccines. Those deprived of sleep develop a 50% impaired antibody response to the vaccine.

Sleep is a time when your body produces the powerful hormone melatonin, a potent immune modulator. Sleep is a time of regeneration, restoration, and repair. Do everything possible to get a restful and uninterrupted night's sleep while you support your immune system at no additional cost. If you just can't sleep well, try taking 50-100 mg of 5-HTP by 9:30 p.m. or earlier. Add GABA (100-500 mg) and melatonin (1-4 mg) if needed. These are available at health food stores and online.

Ref: "Sleep and the common cold," Globe Correspondent, January 13, 2009.

What Chickens Can Tell You About Organic Foods

Cleaning up your diet by eating more raw fruits and vegetables is great for your health, right? Well, only if you avoid genetically modified (GM) fruits and vegetables. Even chickens know GM "food" is bad for you.

A woman living in South Africa said her chickens refused to eat the maize her gardener fed them. She suspected the corn was genetically modified. So she told her gardener to have it tested. Sure enough, the grower of the corn had genetically modified the seed to include a well-known weed and insect killer. Strilli Oppenheimer immediately changed her chickens' diet to organic vegetables and they started eating again.

Monsanto has taken over almost all domestic corn production with its Frankenfood seed that produces the Bt pesticide toxin. Studies show that animals eating this stuff don't do too well. Chickens, given a choice, don't want the stuff. Yet the Fraud and Deception Administration (FDA) has given Monsanto carte blanche to market the Frankenfood WITHOUT labeling it!

Our government has proven it won't defend our basic right to know that what we buy is genetically modified.

Action to take: First, don't eat any corn or soy product in America unless it is organic. That includes anything made with corn or soy. Next, demand from your elected officials laws that require GM food be so labeled.

I believe that GM crops are one of the biggest threats to life on this planet. The environment will eventually cleanse itself of our horrible chemical pollutants. Most have a half life. But GMO self-replicates. So they're not going away on their own.

Perhaps the best way to stop GM foods is through your state government. If you can get them to outlaw GM crops in your state, maybe that will get the attention of these corporate barbarians. Talk to your state officials and tell them to protect you from these dangerous "foods."

Ref: GM Watch August 2, 2009.

Protect Your Body From the Damage of Stress

You probably already know that stress is a killer. You may know someone who had a heart attack during a stressful time in their life. Or you may have developed a heart condition when life threw you a curve ball. Well, now there's a very easy way to protect yourself from the oxidant (rusting) damage caused by stress.

I'm sure you've heard the old familiar saying "an apple a day keeps the doctor away." Well, it's true. A recent study found that apples can protect you when life doesn't go the way we think it should.

While this study looked at only six people, the results are very telling. The researchers placed these six participants on a diet poor in antioxidants for two days. After that, they gave them a homogenate from 600 grams of red delicious unpeeled apples or water.

After giving them the homogenate, the researchers collected their blood at 0, 3, 6 and 24 hours after consumption. Then they took the white blood cells and exposed them to significant oxidant (rusting) stress in a test tube.

Amazingly, the apple homogenate protected the cells. Of course, the protection gradually diminished over the 24 hours. So to keep up the protection, you'll need to follow the old adage and eat an apple a day.

Better yet, eat several apples a day. Apples are delicious. So it's easy to do. But make sure you eat them with the peel. Also make sure they're organic.

If you can't eat this many apples or simply want to superboost your protection,

try AppleBoost. This product is rich in antioxidants, high in fiber, and low in calories. It's completely free from any contaminants (like you'll find in most grocery store apples). And it will give you even more antioxidant protection than just one apple a day. You can order it from Advanced Bionutritionals by calling 800-791-3395.

LETTERS

Q: I am 62 years old. I went to my eye doctor to get my two-year eye exam and the doctor noticed that the shape of my optical nerve was not normal. I have no complaints about my eyesight. I see normal and have no pain. Is there a supplement that I can take to prevent my eyes from getting worse? I am worried. My second question is do you know if there's a Methanol blood test and where I can do this test? I work in an aerospace laboratory and come in contact with a lot of methanol and methanol fumes and other solvents and fumes. I wonder if Methanol has had an effect on my optical nerve. My coworker has swollen optical nerves on both of his eyes and lost part of his vision in both eyes. He doesn't know the cause of his problems and the doctors never try to find out what it could be. —

Renee N., via email

A: Renee, this is a very serious situation. You may have discovered an industrial poisoning that's obviously not just affecting you. It potentially could impact all of your coworkers. Methanol is a specific eye poison. It gets converted to formaldehyde and then to formic acid. Both are poisons and seem to have a predilection to damage the optic nerve specifically!

The major damage occurs at the retrolaminar optic nerve. Its fibers swell. Doesn't this sound like your co-worker? If your work exposes you to methanol without protection, your group may be getting a slow, steady dose of a specific optic nerve poison. Interestingly, there is little damage in the retina itself. That may explain why you don't have any damage to your eyesight.

Action to take: Demand an immediate blood test for methanol and formaldehyde for yourself and co-workers! Any major lab can do it easily. Please alert everyone in your workplace. If methanol is the culprit, you may want to talk with an experienced industrial attorney.

The supplement family of folic acid can aid in your body burning the toxic metabolites to harmless carbon dioxide and water. I would use the form of folic

acid found in Metagenics Folapro, which is available online and in many health food stores. Take one daily.

Q: Are you aware of any vegetarian supplements that I can use in place of animal glandular products? Specifically, I would like to find a substitute for an adrenal supplement, which contains 100 mg Bovine Adrenal substance plus 20 mg Bovine Adrenal Cortex. I contacted the manufacturer and learned that they have already discontinued selling brain glandulars because "Mad Cow disease is only in the brain." But they still sell other glandulars because they are not connected to the brain. Perhaps that is true, but I doubt that the 20-year-old victims in Britain were all eating brain burgers. Are there any alternatives? — *name withheld on request*

A: First, my favorite glandulars come from the Biotics Company and Standard Process. I've used both for years and they are quite effective. Sometimes, there's not much of an alternative to animal glandulars, and you are hearing that from a virtual vegan.

Now regarding your adrenals, the following nutrients can improve or optimize its function: vitamin B5 (in the form of Pantethine), vitamin C, and Royal Jelly. Adaptogens (herbs that help your body adapt to stress) can also improve adrenal function. Some include Ashwaganda, ginseng, eleutherococcus (Siberian ginseng), Codonopsis root extract, and Astragalus. A form of licorice called DGL (which has removed most of the salt retaining properties) can also improve the functioning of the hormones (cortisone, in particular) your adrenal makes.

If you're looking for another way to boost your adrenals, my friend and colleague Frank Shallenberger, MD developed a supplement called Adrenal Factor. It does contain liver concentrate (again, it's tough to avoid all animal products) and adrenal powder. But the latter is hormone free. Dr. Shallenberger has seen very positive results from this formula. You can order by calling Advanced Bionutritionals at 800-791-3395.

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