Omega 3’s for a Healthy Heart

By Jennette Wells

Maintaining a healthy heart and reducing the risk of heart disease is important for healthy aging. Omega-3 fatty acids are a type of polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) important for heart health. Research shows omega-3 fatty acids reduce the risk of irregular heart beats, can help lower blood pressure, slow plaque growth in arteries and may help lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels.

Omega-3 fatty acids cannot be made in the body, therefore must be obtained through diet. The current suggestion for omega-3 fatty acids is 7-11 grams per week. The most common sources of omega-3 fatty acids are seafood (fatty fish), fish oil supplements, flaxseeds and canola oils.

Fish and plant sources of Omega 3 Fatty Acids:

- Salmon
- Sardines
- Tuna
- Chia seeds
- Flaxseeds
- Walnuts
- **Salmon -wild vs. farmed**

Is there a difference between farmed raised salmon and wild salmon?

Yes. Wild salmon is 30% higher in protein and has a healthier ratio of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. Farmed salmon is fed antibiotics, pesticides, and red dyes to make the flesh pink (farm raised salmon has naturally grey flesh).

Information references:

Enjoy foods with Omega-3 fatty acids for a healthier heart.

**The suggested intake for Omega-3 fatty acids:**

7-11 grams each week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Serving</th>
<th>Omega-3 Fatty Acids</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salmon (fresh or frozen)</td>
<td>4 oz.</td>
<td>1.7 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sardines (canned)</td>
<td>4 oz.</td>
<td>1.8 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuna (canned in water)</td>
<td>4 oz.</td>
<td>0.3 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chia seeds</td>
<td>1 oz.</td>
<td>4.9 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flaxseeds (ground)</td>
<td>1 oz.</td>
<td>1.8 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnuts</td>
<td>1 oz.</td>
<td>2.6 grams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish oil/ Omega-3 supplements (cod liver oil)</td>
<td>1 TBSP</td>
<td>2.8 grams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Speak with your health care provider before adding supplements to your diet.

What about mercury in seafood?

Seafood that should be limited due to the high levels of mercury are: swordfish, shark, king mackerel, tile fish and golden snapper. Tuna should be limited to 6 oz. (ounces) per week.