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Life Extension Update Exclusive

Study finds fish oil supplements safer than eating fish

A study published in the January 2005 issue of the *Archives of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine* (<http://arpa.allenpress.com>) concluded that consuming fish oil supplements may be safer than eating fish.

Researchers from Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard Medical School in Boston analyzed five brands of fish oil for levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and other organochlorines (OCs) such as DDT that are commonly found in fish.

PCBs are byproducts of industrial processes that were banned in 1977, but are still found in products made prior to the ban, and continue to persist in the environment. PCBs have reproductive, skin, glandular, liver, developmental and immunologic effects and are known carcinogens. The upper limit of PCBs allowable in edible fish was limited to 2 parts per million by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 1984.

In previous research, the team tested 5 fish oil brands for mercury, and none were found to contain significant amounts.

The researchers found that the levels of PCBs and organochlorines were below the detectable limit in all brands tested. They note that fish oil contains at least 5 times less PCB than the FDA limits. If fish from the Great Lakes was consumed at the optimal recommended amount of 400 grams of fish per week, one would be consuming at least 70 times more PCBs and 120 times more organochloride pesticides than would be consumed with a customary dose of 1 ½ grams fish oil per day for one week.

The authors conclude, "Our data suggests that even large amounts of fish oil can be consumed without risk of toxicity. This is particularly important because high doses of fish oil supplements are currently being used to treat hypertriglyceridemia and to augment antidepressive therapy... Our data concerning the levels of OCs suggest that fish oil supplements may be preferable to fish consumption as a dietary guideline for the general population and as a therapeutic source omega-3 fatty acids in patients with cardiovascular disease and depression." (Melanson SF et al. Measurement of organochlorines in commercial over-the-counter fish oil preparations. *Arch Pathol Lab Med.* 2005;vol 129:74-77.)

Protocol

Depression

To feel upset because of a job layoff, a broken marriage, a bankruptcy, or the loss of a loved one is a normal response to an unhappy event. Generally, our feelings of sadness are proportional to our loss, and this "reactive depression," as doctors call it, goes away with time.

But endogenous, or major depression often strikes for no apparent reason. It doesn't seem to be caused by outside events, such as the loss of a job. Instead, the black mood grows and grips from within. This crippling darkness can last for weeks, months, or

years and may make it impossible for us to carry on our normal lives.

Although we're only beginning to pull back the curtains that hide the inner workings of the human brain, we do know that several neurotransmitters (chemical messengers) including dopamine, norepinephrine, and serotonin, help to regulate our moods and keep us happy. Depressed people tend to have lower levels of norepinephrine, dopamine, and serotonin.

Omega-3 fatty acids control various enzyme systems, cell membrane fluidity, inflammatory processes, and several aspects of neurotransmitter function. Depressed people seem to have low levels of omega-3 fatty acids in their diet and in their cell membranes (Edwards et al. 1998). One study in the Archives of General Psychiatry found that 9.6 grams a day of omega-3 fatty acids for 4 months benefited people with bipolar disorder (alternating episodes of depression and mania) significantly more than a placebo (olive oil) (Stoll et al. 1999).

<http://www.lef.org/protocols/prtcl-040.shtml>

Featured Products

Super EPA/DHA with Sesame Lignans

Omega-3s are a group of polyunsaturated fatty acids found in fish and certain plant oils that provide important health benefits. It is necessary to maintain an appropriate balance of omega-3s in your diet as they promote good health. Omega-3 fatty acids play a crucial role in cardiovascular health and brain function, as well as in normal growth and development. At all stages of life, you need omega-3 fatty acids to ensure your overall health and well-being.

Super EPA/DHA with Sesame Lignans is from a new source of high quality fish oil with a unique 35%/25% ratio of EPA/DHA. The premium fish oil in Super EPA/DHA with Sesame Lignans has been tested for pollutants including dioxins, furans, PCBs and heavy metals. The fish oil is sourced from the purest wild sardine, anchovy and mackerel fished in cold, deep waters off South America where there are significantly less environmental impurities. Super EPA/DHA with Sesame Lignans is the product of a healthy, fully sustainable fishery and is a renewable resource.



<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/item00755.html>

St John's Wort

St. John's Wort (hypericin extract) is a weak inhibitor of monoamine oxidase A, an enzyme which may destroy dopamine in the brain and lead to low spirits. Flavonoids, hypericin, and pseudo-hypericin are the constituents thought to be associated with the benefits of St. John's Wort. In particular, hypericin appears to be the active ingredient.



<http://www.lef.org/newshop/items/item00351.html>

Super Sale extended thru February 3 2005!

Due to the tremendous increase in call volume Life Extension experienced on the last day of Super Sale, some Life Extension customers could not get through to place their orders on January 31. Super Sale prices will be honored through February 3 2005, so order now! Call 1-800-544-4440 or order online.

<http://www.lef.org/newshop/>

If you have questions or comments concerning this issue or past issues of Life Extension Update, send them to ddye@lifeextension.com or call 954 766 8433 extension 7716.

For longer life,

Dayna Dye
Editor, Life Extension Update
ddye@lifeextension.com

LifeExtension.com
1100 West Commercial Boulevard
Fort Lauderdale FL 33309
954 766 8433 extension 7716

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