

Why take fish oils?



Most people know that fish oils are anti-inflammatory and good for joints and skin health, but that's generally where public awareness ends. Fish oils are a cornerstone treatment for so many conditions and have been shown to have significant benefits for asthma, eczema, migraine, diabetes, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, depression, poly cystic ovarian syndrome, and rheumatoid arthritis, as well as other autoimmune conditions. Fish oils can also help improve your cholesterol values on your blood test, are important for baby's development during pregnancy and can improve memory, vision and nerve function. However, before you race down to the supermarket for your tub of 500 capsules for \$10, know that in a lot of circumstances, fish oils can actually have the opposite effect and be pro-inflammatory!

Quality is key!

I often tell my patients that of all supplements, ensuring you are buying quality is most important when it comes to fish oils. Fish oil can easily oxidise which is why it is important to keep fish oils in the fridge after opening, just to preserve the quality and prevent oxidation due to heat. Unfortunately, many of the cheaper fish oils aren't manufactured or transported under controlled



conditions and can already be completely spoiled before they hit the shelves. Also, they can be high in heavy metals such as mercury, plastics, pesticides and other environmental toxins. Many manufacturers don't even test at all for levels of plastics.

The fish oils I use are strictly manufactured and third party tested to be as pure and fresh as possible. They guarantee levels of these contaminants to be many times lower than the health and safety requirements dictate as acceptable.

How do I know if I need fish oil?

If you're not consuming oily fish such as salmon or tuna at least once or twice a week, you likely won't be getting enough omega-3. Similarly, if your diet is highly processed and low in fruits and vegetables, this will bring down your omega-3 status. 80% of Australians are not meeting the recommended daily intakes for omega-3 fatty acids.

A simple finger prick test allows us to find out your omega-3 index. You want to aim for a value between 8 and 12%. Most people from cultures who consume a lot of oily fish generally fall within this range. Unfortunately, most Australians are closer to the 4-6% mark.

I have test kits in the clinic. You can either come in and I'll perform the test for you, or you can pick up a test to complete at home and post off for analysis.

Can it be dangerous?

There is really only one precaution to using fish oils. That is that they can thin the blood slightly. This is actually one of their many benefits as it is cardioprotective. However, if you are about to have surgery it can prolong bleeding so should be stopped for a few days before and a couple of days after surgery.

Give me a call if you'd like to discuss whether fish oil supplementation or omega-3 testing is a good idea for you.