

7022 - ESSENTIAL FATTY ACIDS (EFA)



Can fat be good for us?

There is a huge misperception when it comes to eating fat. Can consuming fat be healthy for us? As a matter of fact, it can! We just have to be educated on what types of fats are the most beneficial for us.

The main components of all fats are the fatty acids. Fatty acids are saturated or unsaturated (monounsaturated or polyunsaturated). Fats containing a high proportion of saturated fatty acids are solid at room temperature. These are commonly known as saturated fats and are usually derived from animal sources e.g. lard and butter. Most plant fats are high in either polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fats, except palm and coconut fat which are highly saturated.

Saturated and monounsaturated fats are not necessary in the diet as they can be made in the human body. Two polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) that cannot be made in the body are linoleic acid and alpha-linolenic acid. They must be provided by the diet and are known as **Essential Fatty Acids (EFA)**.....eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA).

- **Polyunsaturated fats** [ie: Omega-3 (EPA and DHA) and Omega-6]
 - liquid at room temperature, helps decrease blood fat (triglycerides), helps decrease cholesterol (or keeps LDL low), helps keep blood thin, helps lower risk of heart disease, may benefit overall metabolism, helps with joint mobility, helps with skin and hair appearance
- **Monounsaturated fats** [ie: canola oil, olive oil, peanut oil, soft tub margarine]
 - may help decrease cholesterol
- **Saturated fats** [ie: lard, butter, cheese, cream, red meats]
 - solid at room temperature, raises blood cholesterol and blood fat levels, should be less than 5 grams per serving on the food label
- **Trans fats** (ie: shortening, some butter/margarine, some sprays)
 - hydrogenated products (process from liquid to solid), hardens arteries, diet high in trans fats leads to heart attacks, diabetes, and some cancers, look for 0 grams of trans fats on the food label

***ESSENTIAL Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids - Dietary Sources - *Essential = body cannot produce; therefore, we have to ingest!**

Omega-6 (Linolenic Acid)

Food Sources – vegetables, fruits, nuts, grains, seeds
Oils – safflower, sunflower, corn, soya, evening primrose

Omega-3 (Alpha-Linolenic Acid)

Food Sources – fish (salmon, sardines, trout, anchovy, flaxseeds (linseeds), flaxmeal (ground seeds), mustard seeds, soya beans, walnut oil, green leafy vegetables, grains
Oils – fish oil, flaxseed oil, canola oil (rapeseed), soya

*****It is highly recommended that prior to supplementing, one should consult a doctor – especially if one is already on blood pressure medication, blood thinner, or any other heart medication as Omega-3s do thin the blood.**

*****If there is a fish allergy, do not take a Fish Oil Supplement. Instead, try Flaxseed Oil. Check with your doctor to be certain it's for you!**

Omega-3 Capsule Supplement Tip List: If you choose to consume Fish Oil as a supplement, here is a list of what to look for on the label!

Front Label should read: Fish Oil, Salmon Oil, Omega-3, Or a combination (ie: Salmon and Fish Oils), at least 1000 mg capsule

Side Label should read: DHA (ie: at least 120 mg), EPA (ie: at least 180 mg), add both concentrations together and it should equal 300 mg (at least!!)

Ingestion Tips: Take 3 per day, take with food to limit 'fish repeats', take altogether (so you don't forget during the day), **enteric coated** is a harder shell that will limit the fish repeats.

