



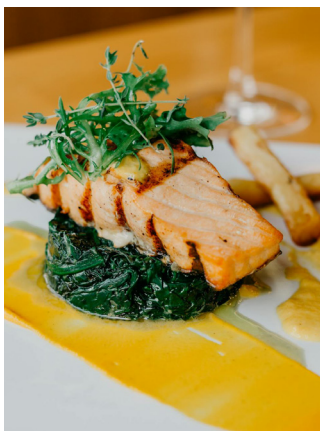
# Eat More Omega-3s

## CHALLENGE

Add healthy fats to your diet

## Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read “Eat More Omega-3s.”
2. Create a plan to eat more foods with omega-3 fatty acids.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



You’re sitting in a restaurant looking over the menu trying to decide what to order.

- Do you choose grilled salmon served with steamed broccoli and brown rice?
- Or do you order the T-bone steak served with mashed potatoes and gravy and a pat of butter?

Before you rattle off your order to your server, consider making your decision based on which meal contains healthy fats.

- The fish or the steak?
- The leafy greens or the potatoes?

If you need a little help, here’s a hint: Not all fats are bad. The salmon dish served with steamed broccoli contains healthy fats known as omega-3 fatty acids.

Your body uses omega-3s to protect your heart, reduce inflammation, lower triglyceride levels and blood pressure, and keep your brain healthy.<sup>1</sup>

And most people don’t get enough omega-3 fatty acids in their diet. This month, give your diet an upgrade and take the challenge to Eat More Omega-3s.

Why omega-3s are good for you  
<https://tinyurl.com/36yv4meh>

## Omega-3 Challenge

How much do you know about omega-3 fatty acids? Take this quiz to find out.



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1.   Omega-3 fatty acids found in fish help reduce the risk for heart disease and heart-related deaths.
2.   Omega-3 fatty acids have no impact on joint pain or arthritis.
3.   Good sources of omega-3 fatty acids include leafy green vegetables, avocados, nuts and seeds, vegetable oils, and fish.
4.   Making sure you get adequate amounts of omega-3 fatty acids in your diet improves brain health and may help prevent Alzheimer’s disease and dementia.
5.   You must get omega-3 fatty acids from food sources or supplements.

How did you do? About 68 percent of adults in the U.S. don’t get enough omega-3 fatty acids from food or supplements.<sup>2</sup> Learning how to include more food rich in omega-3 fatty acids can improve your health.

Answers: 1.True, 2.True, 3.False, 4.True, 5.True.

## Beware of Bad Fats

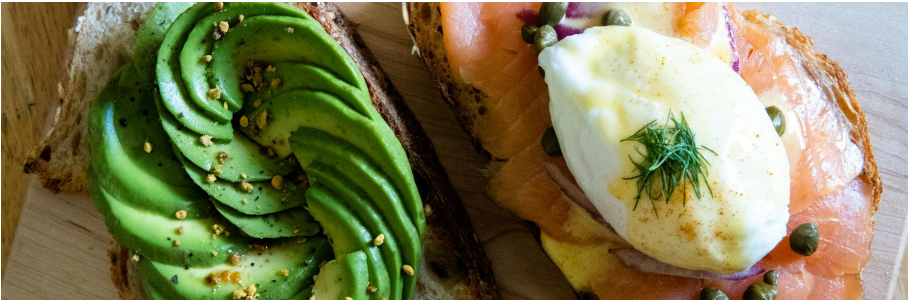
If you were partial to the T-bone steak in the restaurant example, pay attention. It does not contain healthy fat. Beware of these bad fats.

**Saturated fats** are found in meats and whole-fat dairy products like butter, cream and whole milk.

- Red meat contains saturated fat that increases cholesterol levels and your risk for heart disease.
- You can see saturated fat around steak, ribs, and other cuts of meat.
- And you’ll even find it under the skin of chicken and poultry.

**Trans fats** are made when vegetable oil is “hydrogenated” and turned into a solid like margarine or shortening.

- It’s found in a wide variety of processed foods.
- Trans fats have been linked to diabetes, stroke, and heart disease.
- And the U.S. Food and Drug Administration recently banned one type of trans fats in all foods.<sup>3</sup>



## 11 Ways to Add More Omega-3s to Your Diet

Wondering how to add more omega-3-friendly foods to your diet? Eat more plant-based foods and fish. Here are 11 simple ways you can add more omega-3 fatty acids and other healthy fats to your diet:

### 1. In place of butter use spreads

- Try hummus and nut butters, trans-fat-free margarines, and olive oil and garlic.

### 2. Season with herbs

- Basil, oregano, cloves, marjoram, tarragon, and thyme all contain omega-3 fatty acids.

### 3. Always use vegetable oils...

- In place of all-animal fats and solid fats such as shortening for sautéing and cooking.

### 4. Bake your own treats

- Off-the-shelf cookies, pastries, cake, and crackers contain unhealthy fats.
- But you can make your own with non hydrogenated vegetable oil.

### 5. Choose healthier snacks

- Try baked kale chips. Eat broccoli or cauliflower florets. Or have a piece of whole-grain toast with peanut butter.

### 6. Go vegan for a day

- Even if you're not a vegetarian, try eating a plant-based diet for at least one day a month. You'll probably eat more fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds, legumes, and whole grains than you normally would. And that's a good thing.

### 7. Cook from scratch

- When you order fast food or buy packaged meals, there's a good chance

15 foods high in omega-3s  
<https://tinyurl.com/s7fjcB3z>

they contain saturated fats or trans fats.

- But if you cook from scratch using raw foods and spices, you'll get more omega-3s in your diet and avoid unhealthy fats.

### 8. Choose lean fish and poultry

- If you're not a vegetarian, avoid red meats that contain saturated fats.
- Instead, choose lean fish and skinless poultry that contain omega-3 fatty acids.

### 9. Eat low-fat dairy or soy products

- Low-fat dairy or soy-based products like milk and yogurt contain healthy amounts of omega-3 fatty acids.
- Read food labels for options fortified with omega-3 fatty acids.
- More food manufacturers are doing this because of the known health benefits.

### 10. Stock up on nuts, seeds, and avocados

- These plant-based foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids can be eaten as a snack or easily added to salads and other recipes.

### 11. Take an omega-3 supplement

- If you are a vegetarian, you can get adequate omega-3 fatty acids from plant-based foods. But many choose to take an omega-3 supplement, too.

Are you getting enough omega-3s?  
<https://tinyurl.com/5n8yvnpk>

- If you're not a vegetarian, but you rarely consume fish or plant sources of omega-3s, you may also want to consider taking a supplement.

### Try these omega-3-friendly foods

- **Oils:** Canola, soybean, walnut, and flaxseed oils
- **Unsalted nuts & seeds:** Walnuts, sunflower seeds
- **Fish:** Halibut, salmon, trout, tuna
- **Whole-grains:** Whole-grain breads, cereals, and oatmeal
- **Vegetables:** Avocados, broccoli, spinach, kale, cauliflower, cabbage
- **Legumes:** French beans, Navy beans, mung beans

## 5 Health Benefits of Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Eating foods that contain unsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids can have a positive impact on your health, such as:<sup>4</sup>

- **Improve heart health:** Omega-3s help reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering triglycerides, reducing blood pressure, and improving cholesterol levels.
- **Boost brain power:** Omega-3s support cognitive function and help reduce the risk for age-related memory loss.
- **Reduce inflammation:** Omega-3s contain anti-inflammatory properties that help manage chronic inflammation linked to various diseases.
- **Improve eye health:** Omega-3s help prevent macular degeneration and support overall eye function.
- **Support mental health:** Omega-3s can help reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety, and other mental health disorders.

### References

1. National Institutes of Health. (2024). Omega-3 fatty acids. From: <https://tinyurl.com/5en7b3rk>
2. Murphy, R., et al. (2021). Long-chain omega-3 fatty acid serum concentrations across life stages in the USA: an analysis of NHANES 2011–2012. *BMJ Open*, 11(5):e043301. From: <https://tinyurl.com/yk679jue>
3. U.S. Food & Drug Administration. (2024). Trans fat. From: <https://tinyurl.com/mpbwmpnr>
4. Restivo, J. (2024). Omega-3 foods: Incorporating healthy fats into your diet. Harvard Health Publishing. From: <https://tinyurl.com/5bfzc88z>



# Eat More Omega 3s

## CHALLENGE

Add healthy fats to your diet

### Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, or add to your digital calendar).
2. Record the number of days you eat foods with omega-3 fatty acids.
3. Use the calendar to record your actions and choices to create heart-healthy habits.
4. Review your progress at the end of each day, week, and at the end of the month. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____		
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\_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I ate foods with omega-3 fatty acids

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I did other types of physical activity besides walking

### Other wellness projects completed this month:

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_