

[IMAGE]

Happiness Is... A Filet of Fish

It's no secret that eating fish is good for you. The omega-3 fatty acids found in abundance in cold-water fishes are well-documented to have an association with a lowered risk for heart disease. The best fish for dietary omega-3 include salmon, mackerel, tuna, lake trout, and sardines. The purpose of a study in the



American Journal of Psychiatry was to determine if a specific omega-3 acid called "E-EPA" prevents clinical depression.

Twenty people with major depressive disorder were divided into two equal groups and given either two grams per day of an omega-3 supplement or a placebo, along with their current antidepressant drug therapy. The supplement contained 96% pure fish oil. Patients were followed for four weeks; a depression rating scale was administered to evaluate depression.

Significant improvements from adding E-EPA to therapy were observed by the third week of the study. Six of 10 patients taking the fish-oil supplement noted a 50% reduction in their depression levels, while only one of 10 patients taking the placebo saw a similar reduction. The omega-3 supplement reduced depressed moods, feelings of guilt and worthlessness, and insomnia; no side effects were reported.

The authors of the study caution that they are unsure whether E-EPA works independently as an antidepressant, or simply amplifies the effects of antidepressant drugs. Regardless, fish and fish oil containing omega-3 acids have numerous other health benefits, and fish are excellent sources of protein. Learn about additional benefits of eating healthy at <http://www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/nutrition>.

Reference:

Nemets B, Stahl Z, Belmaker RH. Addition of omega-3 fatty acid to maintenance medication treatment for recurrent unipolar depressive disorder. *American Journal of Psychiatry* 2002;159(3), pp. 477-479.

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