



Omega-3s May Benefit the Lungs, Uterus and Ears in Addition to the Heart

DENVER, Aug. 11 /PRNewswire/ -- Research continues to unveil potential benefits of omega-3 fatty acids found in seafood, pointing to healthful effects on the lungs in children, the uterus in women and hearing in older adults. The August 2010 *PUFA Newsletter* and *Fats of Life* e-newsletters for health professionals and consumers, respectively, report the latest findings about these and other topics.

Two large studies from Europe reported that middle-aged and older adults who ate at least 3 ounces of fatty fish a week were 30 percent less likely to develop heart failure or acute coronary syndrome, which includes heart attack and chest pain, compared with individuals who did not eat fish.

"These studies add more evidence that consuming fatty fish regularly is associated with a lower likelihood of two major types of heart disease, the leading cause of death in western countries," said Joyce Nettleton, D.Sc., editor of the *PUFA Newsletter* and *Fats of Life*. "Moreover, omega-3 fatty acids from seafood have diverse benefits in many other tissues and health conditions."

Case in point, U.S. researchers who provided healthy toddlers different amounts of the omega-3 DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) found that those in the highest DHA group (130 mg per day) had significantly fewer respiratory illnesses—17% compared with 46%—than the group receiving unsupplemented formula.

"If confirmed in larger studies, these results could have far-reaching effects on the health of preschool and school-aged children who are frequently exposed to respiratory illnesses," Nettleton noted.

Premenopausal women may also benefit from higher intakes of seafood omega-3 fatty acids. A large U.S. epidemiological study of 1,000 women showed that those with higher intakes of omega-3s had a 22 percent lower chance of developing endometriosis.

"These findings are especially intriguing because the treatment options for endometriosis are limited and often undesirable," Nettleton said. "If proven effective in controlled intervention trials, omega-3s would offer a non-invasive treatment without side effects."

For the first time, research in older adults linked fish consumption to a significantly lower chance of developing age-related hearing loss. In one study, those who ate fish at least one to two times a week experienced half the rate of progressive hearing loss over five years compared with those who didn't eat fish. Recommendations to consume fatty fish at least twice a week may be well worth listening to.

To learn more about these studies, see the *PUFA Newsletter* and *Fats of Life* at www.fatsoflife.com.

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