

What Are EPA/DHA?



EPA and DHA stand for eicosapentaenoic acid and docosahexaenoic acid respectively. These fatty acids are omega-3 fats, which are found in cold water fish. EPA DHA are highly unsaturated fats because they contain six and five double bonds on their long structural chains. These polyunsaturated fats play a very important role with the function of our bodies.

EPA and DHA are vital nutrients and may be taken to maintain healthy function of the following: brain and retina: DHA is a building block of tissue in the brain and retina of the eye. It helps with forming neural transmitters, such as phosphatidylserine, which is important for brain function. DHA is found in the retina of the eye and taking DHA may be necessary for maintaining healthy levels of DHA for normal eye function.

Cardiovascular system – EPA and DHA are converted into hormone-like substances called prostaglandins, and they regulate cell activity and healthy cardiovascular function.

Human growth and intellectual development – DHA plays a very important role during fetal development, early infancy and old age. High concentrations of DHA are found in the brain and increase 300 to 500 percent in an infant's brain during the last trimester of pregnancy. Adding DHA to a pregnant mother's diet may be beneficial for the fetus's brain development. Elderly people should also take EPA DHA, because as we get older, our bodies form less EPA and DHA, which may cause less mental focus and cognitive function. Taking EPA DHA also may help with mental abnormalities, such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

There are other benefits to taking EPA and DHA because they also act as a source of energy, insulate the body against heat loss, prevent skin from drying and flaking, and cushion tissues and organs.

Who should take EPA DHA? Most people can benefit from taking EPA and DHA.

Dr. Hoffman sells a variety of products containing EPA DHA in his Fullscript dispensary.

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