

Foods High in Omega-3

Omega-3 is easily damaged by oxygen, light and heat, which means that eating the foods that contain them raw is best -- though baking or broiling will cause less nutrient loss than frying or boiling.

What are Omega-3 fatty acids?

Omega-3 refers to omega-3 fatty acids. Fatty acids are the building blocks of fats, which are vital nutrients that are used to regulate blood clotting, build cell membranes and support cell health. It's polyunsaturated, which is the relatively heart-healthy kind of fats that help reduce blood triglycerides (fats) and low-density lipoprotein (LDL) so-called bad cholesterol. It also curbs excessive inflammation that underlies serious illnesses like cardiovascular diseases, cancers, and autoimmune diseases.

Omega-3 is called an essential fatty acid because the human body doesn't produce it and it's essential for good health.

Another essential fatty acid is Omega-6, a polyunsaturated fatty acid, which complements the functions of omega-3 in foods. However, omega-6 promotes inflammation and may compete with omega-3 for metabolization in the body. The modern Western diet tends to be top-heavy with omega-6 acids.

How to Balance those Omega-6's?

Plants provide alpha-linolenic acids (ALAs) that have short chains of carbon. Humans and animals convert them into two long-chain forms that are usable by their bodies. It's not too efficient and only about 5 percent of the ALA is converted.

In animals, the ALA has already been converted into usable forms, so they provide a more efficient source of omega-3. Pasture raised animals subsist largely on grasses

Conventionally raised meat is fed corn. Corn oil is among those mentioned on the last page as being high in omega-6 acids, and the same holds true for the corn kernels. Pasture-raised animals subsist largely on grasses, which lowers their omega-6 levels and also boosts their levels of omega-3.

Top Foods for Omega-3

- **Omega-3 Enriched Dairy Foods** – *animals raised on grass diets.* Remember all fatty foods even Omega-3 should be eaten in moderation.

fatty acids vary with animal breed, diet, where they're raised and season

- **Omega-3 Enriched Eggs** – may be raised on flaxseed, fish oil or meal and algae; can drop ratio of Omega 6 to Omega 3 from 15-1 to 1-1.
- **Edamame green soybeans** have quality protein and fiber.
- **Wild Rice** – it is really a grass. Other rice are grains with higher levels of Omega-6.
- **Walnuts** – have more omega-3 in the form of ALA, which is well-balanced with omega-6. Also, walnut oil increases omega-3 acids and cuts the ratio to omega-6 in half.
- **Canola Oil** – highest amount of omega-3 fatty acids and best omega-6 to omega-3 ratio. Also has high smoke point making it good for frying or baking.
- **Winter Squash** – pumpkin, butternut squash acorn, spaghetti squash and turban squash are dense with high concentrations of nutrients.
- **Flax** - a quick flax fix – toast some; sprinkle over low-fat yogurt. It's high in fiber, protein, levels of lignans that seem to prevent growth of cancerous tumors. Having a low smoke point, flax seed oil degrades quickly so ground flaxseed is a better buy.
- **Chia seeds** – good source of Omega-3.
- **Beans** – known for being low in fat but most of the fats are omega-6, which are essential for good health but consumed abundantly in our diet. However, some beans like black beans and kidney beans are almost equal in omega-6 and omega-3'. Kidney beans are even a little higher in /the omega-3 ratio while black beans have an equal balance.
- **Sustainable Seafood** – Some cold-water fish consist of long carbon chains and are high quality omega-3 acids. Enjoy some Atlantic salmon, bluefin tuna, Atlantic mackerel and anchovies. You need to know that any toxins in the food they eat can accumulate in their flesh. It is important to know the source of the fish you consume.

Wild caught seafood eat algae and other fish while farmed fish are fed fish meal or algae supplements. However, some fish are fed on grains and soy meal, resulting in more short-chain ALA and less long EPA and DMA.

For More Information and sources See:

<https://health.howstuffworks.com/wellness/food-nutrition/healthy-eating/5-foods-high-in-omega-310.htm>

