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Omega-3s May Improve Healing After a Heart Attack

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Story at-a-glance

Recent research suggests high doses (4 grams) of the omega-3 fats EPA and DHA may help improve healing after a heart attack. Another study found heart attack survivors who took 1 gram of animal-based omega-3 fat each day for three years had a 50 percent reduced chance of sudden cardiac death. It's important to realize that omega-3 from marine animal and plant sources are NOT interchangeable. Plant-based ALA is a source of energy, while DHA and EPA are important structural elements of your cells

DHA and EPA Protect Your Heart Health

Recent research suggests eating fatty fish and other omega-3 rich foods, including certain plant-based sources, may lower your risk of a fatal heart attack (myocardial infarction) by about 10 percent. Taken AFTER a heart attack, omega-3 fats can also significantly improve your odds of survival. One large trial found that heart attack survivors who took 1 gram of omega-3 fat each day for three years had a 50 percent reduced chance of sudden cardiac death. Another recent placebo controlled study found that high doses of omega-3 supplementation helps your heart heal after a heart attack. A total of 360 heart attack patients were divided into two groups. The treatment group took 4 grams of the prescription omega-3 fish oil called Lovaza. The placebo group received corn oil. After six months, the treatment group showed a 5.6 percent reduction in scarring of undamaged heart muscle.

Animal-Based Omega-3 Benefits Heart Health in Many Ways

Lowering blood pressure

✓ Counteracting or preventing cardiac arrhythmia

✓ Counteracting inflammation

✓ Lowering triglyceride concentrations

✓ Helping prevent thrombosis (a blood clot within a blood vessel)

✓ Improving endothelial function (which helps promote growth of new blood vessels)

✓ Preventing fatty deposits and fibrosis of the inner layer of your arteries

Marine animal-based omega-3

- **Sources:** Fatty fish (such as salmon, anchovies, sardines and herring), fish and krill oils.

Plant-based omega-3

- **Sources:** Certain plants, such as flaxseed, chia seeds, nuts (especially walnuts) and leafy greens.