

Omega-3 & Depression

A recent study suggested that omega-3 supplementation may increase dopamine levels, thereby boosting mood. This gives fuel to an article published in Nutrition this month.

The study, led by Laura Colangelo, analyzed dietary intakes of fish, EPA and DHA amongst 3,317 African-American and Caucasian men and women. The average age of the participants at the start of the study was 35. Symptoms of depression were measured using the 20-item Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale. Women with the highest intake of oily fish reduced their number of depressive moments by 25%, while a high intake of the omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA reduced this number by 29%. Men did not respond the same as their female counterparts, but for the population as a whole, EPA and DHA were associated with reduced risk of depressive symptoms at the ten-year stage.

Because EPA and DHA supplements have beneficial outcomes on cardiovascular diseases, have no serious side effects, and might be helpful in reducing hot flashes, research continues to look at middle-aged women with depressive symptoms, according to an article in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.