

# Essential Fatty Acids For Healthy Living

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Feeling lost when the topic shifts to essential fatty acids? Are "Omega-3" and "Omega-6" Greek to you? If so, then it's important that you take a moment to read up on these dietary requirements and ensure that you're getting everything you need for optimal performance. It may be easier than you think!

The first category of fatty acids is called Linoleic Acid (LA), which falls into the poly-unsaturated category. The second is called Alpha Linolenic Acid (LNA), also from the poly-unsaturated category but sometimes referred to as "super-unsaturated" because of its extremely low melting point.

LA and LNA facilitate the production of other naturally produced fatty acids, so they're really important supplements to get the body energized. Additionally, growing processes and mental functions are improved as the fatty acids act as transporters of oxygen, electrons and energy in and out of cells. With these acids, hemoglobin production is stimulated and nutrients pass along cell membranes effortlessly. Digestive functions are improved and chronic heartburn becomes a thing of the past.

The recovery time from fatigue is shortened and the damage from saturated fats is reduced, since these fatty acids helps to disperse and transport the bad cholesterol out of the system.

How does one know if he or she is suffering from a deficiency of Linoleic Acid? Symptoms include Eczema-like skin conditions, loss of hair, behavioral outbursts, liver and kidney degeneration, excessive thirst and sweating, arthritis, reproductive failure and increased healing time for wounds or infections.

Essential fatty acids like Linoleic Acid can be found in the "Omega-6" family: vegetables, fruits, nuts, grains and seeds. Other good sources include safflower, sunflower, corn, primrose, pumpkin, wheat germ and soya oils.

Doctors have used Omega-6 / LNA essential fatty acids to reduce inflammation, treat menstrual disorders, improve skin conditions (like acne or psoriasis) and rejuvenate hair follicles.

Telltale signs of Linolenic Acid deficiency are: weakness, impaired vision or learning ability, poor motor skills, tingling in the arms and legs, behavioral outbursts and poor growth.

Essential fatty acids like Linolenic Acid can be found in the "Omega-3" family: mustard seeds, pumpkin seeds, soya bean, walnut oil, green leafy vegetables, grains, spirulina, fish, canola oil and flaxseed oil.

UK research shows that children given essential fatty acids (notably the Omega-3's) scored higher on reading tests, had generally better behavior and less incidences of ADD. Omega-3 treatment has been used by doctors to naturally treat Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, depression, inflammation, arthritis and autoimmune disorders. Harvard University research has also been shown to help with high blood pressure, cholesterol and in cancer prevention.

To improve overall body functions, including mental health and skin conditions, adding one serving of fish or nuts each day can be all it takes. Doctors especially recommend flaxseed, flaxseed oil and fish oil supplements. A balance of the two is crucial for good health, as too much Omega-6 can sometimes have reverse effects.

For vegetarians, good sources of fatty acids include: soy milk, cereals rich in Vitamin D and B12, whole grain breads and leafy green vegetables. It's important, however, that the vegan or vegetarian combine their vegetable intake with iron (pulses, tofu, nuts), calcium (legumes, cashews, almonds) and B12 (wheat germ, yeast extract, avocados). In order to work, these acids need vitamins (A, B3, B6, C, E) and minerals (Magnesium, Zinc) to perform.

Since the Industrial Revolution, there have been dramatic alterations in human food supply, which compromise the quality and quantity of our nutrient intake. While saturated trans-fats have become heavily regulated over the years, most people's diet patterns are far from balanced.

Many people are exposed to a disproportionate amount of Omega-6, compared to Omega-3. Doctors now use essential fatty acids to treat everything from heartburn symptoms to eczema.

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Tips For Your Body's Health

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