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*Evidence from three large trials suggests that intake of omega-3 fatty acids, whether from dietary sources or fish oil supplements, should be increased, especially in those with or at risk for coronary artery disease.*

## REVIEW OF OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS AND HEART DISEASE RISK

The June 2008 issue of *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* summarizes the latest findings on omega-3 fatty acids and cardiovascular health and advocates supplementation for the groups most likely to benefit.

Large trials of over 32,000 participants using fish oil supplements have shown reductions in cardiovascular events (heart attacks, stroke) of 19% to 45%. Researchers recommend consumption of EPA and DHA at 1 gram/day for those with known coronary artery disease, and at least 500 mg/day for those without disease. The recommendation is increased to 3 to 4 grams/day for those with high triglycerides, a dosage shown to lower triglycerides by as much as 20% to 50%.

Since two meals of oily fish per week generally provide only 400 to 500 mg/day of DHA and EPA, people with high triglycerides and heart disease are strongly encouraged to use fish oil supplements to reach beneficial levels. Researchers also state that the combination of omega-3 supplements and statin drugs provide significantly enhanced benefit over statin use alone in improving blood lipid levels.

< *Mayo Clin Proc.* 2008;83(3):324-332. >