USANA HEALTH SCIENCES
essentials of health
March 14th, 2012

New research shows that adults with retinitis pigmentosa that consume higher amounts omega-3 fatty acids may slow the rate of visual decline by as much as 40%, significantly delaying blindness.

OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS SIGNIFICANTLY DELAY BLINDNESS IN PATIENTS WITH RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA

Retinitis pigmentosa is a condition that begins with night blindness, progresses to tunnel vision, and eventually leads to almost complete blindness. Researchers at Harvard University recently performed a study to examine the impact of supplementing 15,000 IU/day of vitamin A palmitate on this eye condition. One of the variables that the researchers recorded was omega-3 fatty acid intake of the subjects.

Analysis of the data showed a benefit with omega-3 fatty acids and vitamin A palmitate that was not seen in vitamin A supplementation alone. They found that those who were supplemented with vitamin A, and also consumed at least 0.2 g/day of omega-3 fatty acids had a 40% slower rate of visual decline.

Individuals with retinitis pigmentosa usually reach almost complete blindness by the age of 60. With a 40% slower rate of visual decline this new research shows that those with higher dietary omega-3 intakes or supplements may delay blindness by as much as 18 years.

Berson EL, Rosner B, Sandberg MA, Weigel-DiFrance C, Willet WC. Omega-3 intake and Visual Acuity in Patients With Retinitis Pigmentosa Receiving Vitamin A. Archives of Ophthalmology. Doi:10.1001/archopthalmol.2011.2580.