

Odyssey's Wellness Committee is pleased to share with you information on health and wellness topics geared toward families and children. We hope you find these tips and tidbits useful.

Odyssey's Wise Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles Program is dedicated to promoting, protecting and enhancing the health and learning potential of our students, families and staff.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids: Fact Sheet

Excerpted from information at <http://www.webmd.com/healthy-aging/omega-3-fatty-acids-fact-sheet>
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Just what are omega-3 fatty acids exactly?

Omega-3 Fatty Acids: Basics

- Omega-3 fatty acids are considered **essential fatty acids**. We need them for our bodies to work normally. Because essential fatty acids (ALA, DHA, EPA) are not made in the body or are inefficiently converted from ALA to EPA and DHA, we need to get them from our diet.
- Omega-3s have a number of health benefits. **Omega-3s are thought to play an important role in reducing inflammation throughout the body** -- in the blood vessels, the joints, and elsewhere. However, omega-3 supplements (EPA/DHA) may cause the blood to thin and cause excess bleeding, particularly in people taking anticoagulant drugs.
- When possible, **try to get omega-3 fatty acids from foods** rather than supplements. Fish high in DHA and EPA omega-3 fatty acids include **anchovies, bluefish, herring, mackerel, salmon (wild has more omega-3s than farmed), sardines, sturgeon, lake trout, and tuna**. Many experts recommend eating these fish two to three times a week.
- Good food sources of ALA -- which is converted into omega-3 fatty acids in the body -- include **walnuts, flax and flaxseed oil, canola oil, olive oil, and soybean oil**.

- Consider eating more free-range poultry and beef. **Free-range animals have much higher levels of omega-3s than typical, grain-fed animals.**

Benefits

- **Blood fat [triglycerides]**. Having high levels of this blood fat is a risk factor for heart disease. DHA alone has also been shown to lower triglycerides.
- **Cardiovascular health**. Omega-3 fatty acids appear to lower the overall risk of death from heart disease.
- **Rheumatoid arthritis**. A number of studies have found that fish oil supplements [EPA+DHA] significantly reduced stiffness and joint pain.
- **Prenatal health**. Studies show that EPA and DHA supplementation during pregnancy boost the health of pregnant women and the development of their children. DHA appears to be important for visual and neurological development in infants.
- **Asthma**. Evidence suggests that a diet high in omega 3s reduces inflammation, a key component in asthma.
- **ADHD**. Some studies show that fish oil can reduce the symptoms of ADHD in some children and improve their cognitive function.
- **Alzheimer's disease and dementia**. Some research suggests that omega-3s may help protect against Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Spaghetti Breakfast Frittata

By Chef MD John La Puma

from http://www.chefmd.com/recipe_display.php?id=101

Cook up a delicious twist on breakfast with this heart healthy, egg recipe using dinner from a previous night. The three types of omega-3 fatty acids are incredibly good for your brain and may lower your risk of Alzheimer's Disease.

Prep Time: 20 min. or less Cook: 20 min.

Ingredients

- 4 ounces multigrain thin spaghetti, broken in half*
- 2 teaspoons extra light olive oil, divided
- 3 large omega eggs
- 2 large omega egg whites
- 1/4 teaspoon each: salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 (6 ounce) bag baby spinach
- 2 tablespoons ground flax meal, such as Bob's Red Mill brand
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/4 cup (1 ounce) grated Parmesan cheese, preferably Parmigiano-Reggiano

- 1-1/3 cups bottled spicy tomato basil pasta sauce, heated
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil

Heat oven to 350 F. Set out 2 cups left-over cooked spaghetti. (Or cook spaghetti according to package directions. Drain well; transfer to a medium bowl and toss with 1 teaspoon of the olive oil. Refrigerate 5 minutes.)

In a large bowl, combine whole eggs, egg whites, salt and pepper, beating with a fork. Meanwhile, heat remaining 1 teaspoon oil in a large nonstick oven-proof skillet. Add garlic; sauté over medium-high heat 1 minute. Add spinach; cook, turning with tongs 1 minute or until spinach is wilted. Remove pan from heat; let stand 2 minutes. Add spaghetti to egg mixture; mix well. Add spinach mixture to the bowl; mix well. Return mixture to same skillet; top with flax meal, nuts and cheese.

Bake 20 minutes or until eggs are set and cheese is melted. Cut into wedges; serve with pasta sauce and garnish with basil.

Total Servings: 4

Calories: 340
Carbohydrates: 34.7g
Cholesterol: 165.6mg
Fat: 14.7g

Saturated Fat: 2.7g
Fiber: 6.9g
Sodium: 608mg
Protein: 19.2g