

DHA in fish oil found helpful for mental health in elderly

Alzheimer Disease (AD) currently affects more than 4.5 million Americans, is expected to hit 16 million by 2050 ⁽¹⁾ and costs \$100 billion each year to treat ⁽²⁾. With the U.S. Census Bureau predicting a population of nearly 58 million "baby boomers" (those between the ages of 65 and 84) by 2030 ⁽³⁾, it is imperative to help maintain mental health in patients.

Now a new study ⁽⁴⁾ has found that DHA, a fat found in fish oil, and also one of the primary fats in the brain, may help patients with age-related cognitive decline (ARCD), a stage that precedes AD ⁽⁵⁾. The study, called the Memory Improvement with DHA Study (MIDAS), looked at 485 men and women between the ages of 61 and 79 and diagnosed with Age-Related Cognitive Decline (ARCD). Study participants were given either 900 mg of DHA or placebo per day for 6 months. During this time, they completed mental tasks called Paired Associate Learning (PAL), which has been shown to separate patients with ARCD from patients with AD ⁽⁶⁾.

By the end of 6 months, the researchers found that those in the DHA group "showed significantly fewer errors" on the PAL test compared to the placebo group (test results were not published by the researchers). The researchers also noted "a significant decrease in the heart rate" of 3.2 beats per minute compared to 1 beat per minute in the placebo group. Blood pressure and body weight remained unchanged between the groups as did hs-CRP, an inflammatory protein implicated in chronic diseases like AD ⁽⁷⁾.

For the researchers, "Six-month supplementation with DHA (900 mg/day) improves memory function and decreases heart rate in healthy older adults with ARCD. This improvement on the PAL is associated with a shift in the normative distribution to a younger age" and that "DHA exhibits an excellent safety profile in this older population."

Abstracted from "Results of the MIDAS trial: Effects of docosahexaenoic acid on physiological and safety parameters in age-related cognitive decline" Alzheimer's and Dementia July 2009.

Dagmar stocks only quality pure fish oils which are made from wild Sardines and Anchovies, caught in the open ocean; Anchovies and Sardines have the highest naturally occurring levels of fatty acids EPA and DHA. The *Nordic Naturals* range is free of heavy metals, dioxins, antibiotics and other contaminants found in fish oil from farmed sources. These fish oils are also highly concentrated, either in capsules or liquid, therefore providing your daily needs.

Always check the quantity of EPA and DHA contained in your fish oils – you need 900mg of DHA daily – NOT one gram of fish oils. Fish oils should always contain a little vitamin E which acts as a natural anti-oxidant and prevents the oils from becoming rancid. Fish oils should always be stored in the refrigerator.

References:

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Always check with a qualified natural health practitioner before taking any supplements.