

PRESS RELEASE

RESEARCH STUDY SHOWS SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF AMERICAN ADULTS NOT MEETING RECOMMENDATION FOR OMEGA-3 FATTY ACID INTAKE

Supplementation Could Help U.S. Adult Population Meet Omega-3 Fatty Acid Consumption

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May 15, 2014 (Northridge, CA) – A study published in the Nutrition Journal concludes that a large percent of the U.S. adult population is not meeting recommendations for omega-3 fatty acid consumption set for by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA). The Pharmavite supported study examined the intake of total fish, fish high in omega-3 fatty acids, α -linolenic acid (ALA), eicoapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) in U.S. adults (19+ years) using data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), 2003-2008.

Despite major advances in the prevention of cardiovascular disease (CVD) over the last few decades, morbidity and mortality from CVD remains high with prevalence estimates in the U.S. at approximately 82.6 million . The total cost of CVD has become an economic burden on health care with estimated costs of \$298 million . Therefore, it is not a surprise that the prevention of CVD has become a public health initiative with many attributing variables, of which includes the consumption of fish-derived omega-3 fatty acids.

It has been well-established that the consumption of fish and omega-3 fatty acids may help reduce CVD risk. This is supported by the fact that the American Heart Association's (AHA) Strategic Impact Goal Through 2020 and Beyond recommends at least two 3.5oz of fish servings per week, in addition to the 2010 DGA recommending the consumption of two 4oz servings of seafood per week.

“Omega-3 fatty acids are deemed important from authoritative bodies such as AHA and DGA, however, as our study shows, the majority of American adults do not consume the recommended levels for fish and omega-3 fatty acid,” said Dr. James Brooks, Vice President, Science, Technology and Quality, Pharmavite, and study author. “Strategies to increase consumption of omega-3 fatty acid intake in the U.S. population need to be addressed. It is important to look at supplementation in addition to food sources as a way to help the U.S. population meet these important recommendations.”

The observational study looked at usual intakes from foods alone and from foods plus dietary supplements. Intakes of fish high in omega-3 fatty acids, EPA and DHA were greater in older adults and in males in comparison to younger adults and females. For example, males had higher intake of EPA and DHA from foods and dietary supplements relative to females (44 ± 6 vs 39 ± 4 and 90 ± 7 vs 59 ± 4 mg/d, respectively) and older adults had higher intakes of EPA, but not DHA compared to younger adults (EPA: 34 ± 3 vs 58 ± 9 , $p < 0.05$; DHA: 68 ± 4 vs 81 ± 6). The DGA recommends about 250mg per week of long chain omega-3 fatty acids.

NHANES is a nationally representative, cross-sectional survey of non-institutionalized, civilian U.S. residents collected by the National Center for Health Statistics of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The sample size for this study included 14,338 participants aged 19+ years of age.

The full study can be accessed for free at <http://www.nutritionj.com/content/13/1/31>. Study authors include Yanni Papanikolaou, Nutritional Strategies, Inc.; James Brooks, Pharmavite; Carroll Reider, Pharmavite; and Victor L. Fulgoni, III, Nutrition Impact, LLC.

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Papanikolaou et al.: U.S. adults are not meeting recommended levels for fish and omega-3 fatty acid intake: results of an analysis using observational data from NHANES 2003–2008. *Nutrition Journal* 2014 13:31.

National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institutes: Morbidity and Mortality: 2012 Chart Book on Cardiovascular, Lung, and Blood Diseases. http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/resources/docs/2012_ChartBook_508.pdf Accessed June 7, 2013.