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Good Fats Great Health

We've all heard that we should watch how much fat we consume, but not all fats are bad for us. In fact, some fats are essential for good health. Omega-3 and Omega-6 **fatty acids** are two types of healthy fats that our bodies need but cannot produce on their own. Because of this, we must get them through the foods we eat. Without enough of these essential fatty acids, our bodies cannot function properly, which may lead to various health problems.

Omega-3 and Omega-6 **fatty acids** are classified as polyunsaturated fats. These healthy fats can help lower levels of LDL ("bad") cholesterol, reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke. Unlike saturated fats, polyunsaturated fats are typically liquid at room temperature.

Food Sources of Omega-3 and Omega-6 Fatty Acids

Many nutritious foods contain these beneficial fats, including:

- Fatty fish such as salmon, trout, sardines, tuna, herring, and mackerel
- Flaxseed and flaxseed oil
- Walnuts and chia seeds
- Vegetable oils such as safflower and canola oil
- Tofu
- Eggs

Health Benefits

Omega-3 **fatty acids** offer numerous health benefits, especially for heart health. They are an important component of cell membranes and play a key role in supporting brain, heart, eye, and skin health. Omega-3s also help reduce chronic inflammation throughout the body.

Research shows that Omega-3 **fatty acids** can lower triglyceride levels and may help increase HDL ("good") cholesterol, contributing to a lower risk of heart disease and stroke. They may also help reduce inflammation associated with conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, and asthma. Eating just one 3-ounce serving of fish each week can support heart health and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

The benefits extend beyond heart health. Omega-3 **fatty acids** support healthy vision and may help lower the risk of age-related eye conditions such as macular degeneration, cataracts, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy. They can also promote healthier skin by helping reduce inflammation associated with conditions such as psoriasis, dermatitis, and eczema.

Small Changes, Big Benefits

Making a few simple changes to your diet can have a significant impact on your overall health. Including foods rich in Omega-3 and Omega-6 **fatty acids** is an easy and delicious way to support your heart, brain, eyes, skin, and overall well-being. Healthy fats are an important part of a balanced diet—and they are fats.