Omega-3 fatty acids are known as essential fats. They are “essential” because the body does not make them naturally, so you must get them from the foods you eat. We recommend that you speak with your health care provider before making changes to your diet. You may also consider speaking with a dietitian or nutritionist.

Research has found that omega-3 fatty acids can improve psoriatic symptoms by:

- Decreasing inflammation and improving immune system function
- Reducing redness, thickness and scaling in plaque and guttate psoriasis
- Preventing and managing cardiovascular (heart) disease and other conditions like rheumatoid arthritis
- Increasing effectiveness of traditional psoriasis treatments, such as ultraviolet B light (UVB) phototherapy and oral retinoids like Soriatane (acitretin)
- Reducing joint pain and stiffness of psoriatic arthritis

Omega-3 fatty acids also offer other health benefits. This includes playing an important role in infant development and the functioning of the brain and eye. They are also beneficial in lowering cholesterol and blood pressure. Researchers are studying the effects of omega-3 fatty acids in the treatment of other health conditions as well.

**What are the different types and what foods are they in?**

There are 3 types of omega-3 fatty acids: alpha-lipoic acid (ALA), eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). The health effects of omega-3 fatty acids come mostly from EPA and DHA, but the body converts foods rich in ALA into EPA and DHA.

We recommend that you get most of your nutrients from unprocessed foods. In some cases, fortified foods and dietary supplements may help provide nutrients in addition to the foods that you eat. ALA is found mainly in plant oils. EPA and DHA are found mostly in fish and other seafood.
**What should I know about seafood recommendations?**

The U.S. Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Health and Human Services (DHHS) have made recommendations for seafood, which includes fish or shellfish.

**Adults** should eat at least 8 ounces (about 2 servings) of a variety of seafood each week. **Pregnant or breastfeeding women** should eat at least 8 to 12 ounces and **children** should eat at least 8 ounces of seafood per week that come from foods low in methyl mercury. **Seafood high in EPA and DHA but lower in methyl mercury include:**

- Salmon
- Shad
- Trout
- Anchovies
- Sardines
- Atlantic and Pacific mackerel
- Herring
- Pacific oysters

**What should I do next?**

Contact our Patient Navigation Center to find providers, prepare for appointments, discuss treatments and get help with accessing treatments [find contact information below].

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**What should I know about fish oil supplements?**

Fish oil supplements are not as beneficial as eating foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Studies on EPA and DHA supplements have not shown the same protective effects as foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids.

We recommend speaking with your health care provider, a registered dietitian or nutritionist before starting omega-3 supplements. Keep in mind that special consideration must be taken for those who are pregnant or nursing, trying to become pregnant, allergic to fish or shellfish, or who are children or adolescents.