

Eat More Fish!

by Reginald B. Cherry, M.D.

I love fish, especially salmon, and have heard that it's good for me. But I'm finding it difficult to eat it more than once or twice a week. What else can I do?

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Answer: Fish does, indeed, have incredible health benefits. In fact, by including fish in your diet (or taking fish oil supplements daily) you can lower your risk of heart disease by 50 percent, your risk of death from hardening of the arteries and stroke by 45 percent, and your risk of death from all causes by 27 percent.

And to think: This important nutrient comes right out of Genesis 9:3 where, after the devastation of the plant kingdom from the flood, God added certain animal products to our diet to protect us. One of these animal products is fish. (It's interesting that the last meal Jesus consumed on Earth consisted of fish!)

Studies today, including those out of Wake Forest University Bowman Gray School of Medicine, confirm the health benefits of a substance found in fish, called omega-3s (also known as the essential fatty acids DHA and EPA from fish oil). In fact, more than 5,000 scientific studies show the benefits of omega-3 fatty acids, which you need to consume daily.

Omega-3s strengthen your heart, improve your joints, help your brain and sharpen your memory, and improve the health of your skin. Omega-3s may also keep you from getting depressed, as well as prevent everything from colon problems to Alzheimer's disease.

For many of us, though, it can be difficult to eat enough fish

to reap the health benefits. Statistics show that 60 percent to 70 percent of Americans eat fish only once a week or not at all. Fortunately, with the technology of nutritional supplements, God has made it easy for us to take omega-3s daily. You should take about 600 milligrams of essential fatty acids from fish oil (DHA and EPA) each day.

God really is making it easy for us to protect our precious bodies. If you can lower your risk of death, think better, move better and prevent heart disease, you will be able to finish your course (see Acts 20:24) and complete the work God has given you to do.

A couple of things to keep in mind when including fish in your diet: The healthiest source of DHA is cold-water fish such as salmon, halibut, striped bass, tuna, mackerel and sardines. Also, fresh fish should always be baked or steamed, as frying in oil will diminish most of the health benefits from the DHA.