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How to Balance Omega-3 and Omega-6 in Your Diet

Learn about the importance of Omega-3 and Omega-6, and how to incorporate foods high in Omega-3 and Omega-6

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If you're trying to fuel your body with all the things it needs to stay healthy, you'll have heard of the importance of omega oils and the role they play in a well-rounded diet. However, what you may not know is that there are different types of omega fatty acids, and that these different types of oils need to be balanced in order to give you the maximum health benefits. Read on to learn more about this essential diet component, and to find out about foods high in omega-3 and 6.

Photo credit: iStockphoto

What is Omega-3?

Omega-3 is a type of essential fatty acid. Our bodies do not naturally produce enough omega-3 to function properly, so we have to get this fatty acid from our diet. Foods high in omega-3 include plants and fish (1).

What is Omega-6?

Omega-6 is another type of essential fatty acid. However, it is found in different types of foods than omega-3. Foods high in omega-6 include seeds and oils (2).

Why do I Need to Balance Omega-3 and Omega-

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While omega acids are vital to a healthy body, it is thought that the key to getting the best health benefits lies in balancing them. Not only that, but having significantly more omega-6 than omega-3 could actually cause health problems like cancer, cardiovascular disease and inflammatory diseases like arthritis (3). In order to get the best balance of omega acids, it's important to eat foods high in omega-3 and omega-6. Hold on, we'll show you how!

Choosing Foods High in Omega-3 and Omega-6

Read on to find out easy ways to maintain a healthy balance of omega.



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1. **Eat more nuts.** Nuts like cashews, hazelnuts and pistachios contain high levels of both omega-3 and omega-6, making them a great choice for people looking to consume balanced omega levels (4).
2. **Mix your seeds.** There are few seeds that contain both types of omega, so mix up seeds rich in omega-3, like pumpkin and flax seeds, with those that contain omega-6, like sunflower seeds, in order to get a good balance (4).
3. **Use oil.** Plant-based oils such as flax seed are an extremely healthy way to cook as they contain both omega-3 and omega-6.
4. **Embrace fat!** Foods rich in healthy fat and oil, such as avocados and fish, are full of omega acids (5). So don't be afraid to incorporate these high-fat foods into your diet to ensure you're getting the doses you need!

Eating these foods high in omega-3 and 6 is a great way to maintain a healthy body!

About the Author:

Maryruth has been seeking the keys to environmental justice—both at home and at work—for over a decade. Growing up adjacent to wild spaces,

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Maryruth developed a healthy respect (and whimsical appreciation) for things non-human, but her practical mind constantly draws her down to earth to ponder tangible solutions to complex eco-problems. With interests that range from green living to green business, sustainable building designs to organic gardening practices, ecosystem restoration to environmental health, Maryruth has been exploring and writing about earth-matters for most of her life. Of special interest is the subject of ecopsychology and the role the natural world plays in the long-term health and well-being of humanity. You can learn more about Maryruth's work by [visiting her site](#).

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