

# NORDIC NEWS

## professional sales

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### RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT *by Tori Hudson, ND*

## Omega-3 Fish Oil, Female Fertility, and Healthy Pregnancy

Omega-3 essential fatty acids from fish oil are an important strategy in enhancing female fertility and carrying a pregnancy to term. Chronic inflammation and infection are involved in female infertility in cases related to endometriosis and pelvic infections. Reducing inflammation and enhancing the immune system is a vital aspect of treating these conditions and in supporting the implantation of the embryo in the uterus. Omega-3 essential fatty acids play a critical role in these anti-inflammatory and immune-stimulating mechanisms.

Trials on omega-3 fatty acids conducted in pregnant women have shown a significant reduction in the incidence of premature delivery. In one such study, fish oil was investigated for its effects on pregnancy duration, birth weight, intrauterine growth restriction, and pregnancy-induced hypertension. Omega-3 fatty acid supplementation of 2.7 grams per day was compared to olive oil and/or no supplement. The fish oil-supplemented pregnancies lasted four days longer and birth weight was 107 grams greater.

In another study, infants born of mothers who had been given cod liver oil had higher levels of DHA in their umbilical cord, and a longer gestation. Fish oil also appeared to be related to a reduction in the risk of preterm delivery in those women who had experienced a previous preterm delivery. In a study of pregnant women in Iceland, those consuming liquid cod liver oil in the first 15 weeks of pregnancy had babies with higher birth weight. Preeclampsia, a dangerous condition related to high blood pressure, edema (swelling) and protein in the urine can also be helped by fatty acid supplementation. A group of pregnant women receiving a combination of evening primrose oil and fish oil had a significantly lower incidence of edema.

Current scientific research continues to show us that enhancing fertility and optimizing pregnancy remains a special feature of supplementing with fish oils.

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