

## **Fish, meat, and risk of dementia: cohort study**

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THESE AUTHORS NOTE:

Dietary fat has a role in dementia.

Fatty acids could be involved in dementia through these mechanisms:

- (1) Atherosclerosis
- (2) Thrombosis
- (3) Inflammation

These authors "evaluated whether there is a relation between consumption of fish (rich in polyunsaturated fatty acids) or meat (rich in saturated fatty acids) and risk of dementia."

The authors used data from an epidemiological study of cognitive and functional ageing involving 1,674 people aged 68 and over without dementia and living at home.

Participants were evaluated for consumption of meat and fish or seafood.

These participants were followed up at 2, 5, and 7 years afterwards.

"During the seven years of follow up 170 new cases of dementia occurred, including 135 cases of Alzheimer's disease."

There was a "significant trend between increasing consumption of fish or seafood and decreasing incidence of dementia."

"Participants who ate fish or seafood at least once a week had a significantly lower risk of being diagnosed as having dementia in the seven subsequent years."

The authors found "no significant association between meat consumption and risk of dementia."

COMMENT BY AUTHORS:

"Elderly people who eat fish or seafood at least once a week are at lower risk of developing dementia, including Alzheimer's disease."

The n-3 fatty acids do the following:

- (1) Protect the vascular system
- (2) Reduce inflammation in the brain
- (3) Have a specific role in brain development
- (4) Have a specific role in the regeneration of nerve cells

#### KEY POINTS FROM DAN MURPHY

- (1) Fish and fish oil are rich in polyunsaturated n-3 fatty acids. [n-3 = omega-3]
- (2) Red meat is rich in saturated fats.
- (3) Consumption of n-3 fatty acids by eating fish once per week significantly reduce the risk of dementia and Alzheimer's Disease.
- (4) Eating red meat does not increase the risk of dementia or Alzheimer's Disease.
- (5) n-3 fatty acids are anti-inflammatory.
- (6) n-3 fatty acids are important in the development of the brain.
- (7) n-3 fatty acids are important in the regeneration of nerve cells.
- (8) n-3 fatty acids protect the vascular system.

The evidence keeps piling up that omega-3 fatty acids are a key component to the innate diet.