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## **Statins used to lower cholesterol levels may inhibit benefits of omega-3**

A French study\* reported this month that in patients taking a statin to reduce blood cholesterol levels, the beneficial effects of EPA\* and DHA\* omega-3 fatty acids may be inhibited.

Early clinical trials demonstrated the health benefits of EPA/DHA omega-3 in patients at risk from cardiovascular disease. However several recent trials have failed to show this effect.

This authors of the study addressed this issue, focusing on the changes in medical care that have occurred, namely that most patients in recent clinical trials are no longer omega-3 deficient and almost all are treated with statins. Furthermore, the authors stated that recent trials suggest that EPA/DHA omega-3s reduce the risk of arrhythmias only in patients not taking a statin, and that this effect cannot be attributed to a parallel protection by statins.

The study also noted that statins favour the metabolism of omega-6 fatty acids, which in turn inhibits the beneficial effects of omega-3s. In addition, the authors pointed out that omega-6s increase insulin resistance and the risk of diabetes. Further studies are needed to determine if statins also inhibit the numerous non-cardiovascular beneficial effects of omega-3 consumption.

The authors concluded that their study raises several major questions about therapies used to prevent the development and complications of cardiovascular disease. They called for a rethink of the use of omega-3 supplements and statins, including the unrestricted use of EPA/DHA omega-3s to correct any degree of omega-3 deficiency.

Qponics is actively developing a novel aquaculture-algaeculture system to grow algae for the organic production of vegetarian oil high in EPA and DHA omega-3 fatty acids that are essential for good health.

\*Source: BMC Medicine. 2013 January;11:5. <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1741-7015/11/5/abstract>

\*EPA: eicosapentaenoic acid

\*DHA: docosahexaenoic acid

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