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Vegetarian Omega 3 Sources

Omega 3 is an essential fatty acid that has been studied widely - boasting health benefits like the ability to prevent heart disease, lower cholesterol, reduce inflammation and improve brain function. Everyone has heard of taking fish oils and eating certain fish as a source of omega 3, but what if you're vegetarian or can't eat fish?

Luckily there are many non-meat sources of omega 3 that you can eat to gain some of the benefits outlined above. There is a difference however - these sources need to be converted in the body into the right type to help set off the right cascade of reactions that will help your body.

The omega 3 found in fish and some other meats (like kangaroo) is easily utilized down the anti-inflammatory pathways of the body, containing EPA and DHA. The omega 3 found in vegetarian sources most often contains alpha linolenic acid which requires certain cofactors (like zinc and B6) to be utilized appropriately by your body. Vegetarian or not - some of the following sources of omega 3 should be included daily in the diet to help give your body the essential fatty acids it needs to function well.

Flaxseeds/linseeds - A well known source of omega 3 - these little seeds should be eaten raw and ground up so that you can absorb the oils and other great nutrients they contain. 1tbsp is a good sized serve. Use flaxseed oil only if it is cold pressed and stored in an opaque airtight bottle in the fridge.

Chia seeds - all the craze at the moment, chia seeds are high in omega 3 fatty acids and have many other benefits too! Eat 1tsp-1tbsp a day.

Walnuts - a great source of omega 3 as well as magnesium and other minerals - walnuts should be sourced fresh and kept in an airtight container in the fridge to prevent rancidity. Walnuts should not have a sharp taste - if they do it means they have gone rancid.

Organic eggs - eggs can contain good levels of omega 3 depending on the diet of the chickens they come from. Buying organic free range eggs that are allowed to roam and eat bugs etc. will give you a higher amount of omega 3.

Algae - Algae can be taken as a supplement or as a powder in smoothies or juices. Algae is a microscopic plant grown on water that can contain great levels of omega 3. It's also incredibly nutritious and very alkalizing, making it extra anti-inflammatory.

For advice on how to improve the nutrition in your diet, make an appointment with a Brisbane Natural Health naturopath. For other health related issues, you may also wish to speak with one of our acupuncture, massage or even a hypnotherapy Brisbane professional.

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