

*A recent meta-analysis (involving almost 100 clinical trials and more than 250,000 individuals) reviewed mortality risk reduction from both statin drugs and omega-3 fatty acids. The results were impressive: statins reduced overall mortality risk by 13%, while omega-3 fatty acids reduced it by a dramatic 23%.*

### **Omega-3 fatty acids vs. statin drugs for reducing mortality risk**

A review published in the April 11, 2005 issue of Archives of Internal Medicine analyzed the effects of various lipid-lowering regimens on overall mortality and mortality from coronary heart disease. Researchers reviewed 97 clinical trials that included 137,140 men and women receiving treatment and 138,976 control subjects. This analysis compared the mortality risk associated with diet, lipid-lowering drugs, omega-3 fatty acids (commonly found in fish oils), and niacin.

Statins (a class of lipid-lowering drugs) and omega-3 fatty acids significantly lowered both overall and coronary heart disease mortality risk during the trial periods. When compared to controls, overall mortality risk was reduced 13 percent by statin drugs and 23 percent by omega-3 fatty acids. When the risk of mortality from heart disease alone was examined, the use of statin drugs and omega-3 fatty acids were found to lower the risk by 22 and 32 percent, respectively.

Since omega-3 fatty acids did not reduce cholesterol levels significantly, researchers suggest that protection against heart arrhythmias, in addition to known anti-inflammatory properties, may be responsible for the reduction in mortality risk.

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