

*Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), an omega-3 fatty acid found most commonly in fish oil, is important to neural development. It is speculated that DHA intakes are low enough in some pregnant women to impair infant development.*

### **Omega-3 fatty acids in pregnant women and visual acuity in infants**

A new study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* compared eye development scores among infants of women who supplemented DHA versus infants of women with typical diets. Supplemental DHA at 400 mg/day or a placebo was consumed by the women from 16 weeks of gestation until delivery. Researchers determined maternal red blood cell fatty acids, dietary intakes at 16 and 36 weeks gestation, and infant visual acuity at 60 days of age.

Infant visual acuity was related to sex and maternal DHA levels. More infant girls in the placebo than in the DHA group had a visual acuity below average and maternal red blood cell fatty acids were inversely related to visual acuity in both boys and girls.

These results suggest that some pregnant women in the study population were DHA-deficient.

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