

Supplement advice based on omega-3 test results

Below are the omega-3 status test result recommendations with corresponding supplement advice. **If women have depleted or low omega-3 levels (less than 3.7%),** they need to take omega-3 supplements to restore this depleted level and reduce the risk of early birth.

The suggested dose is approximately 800mg of DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) and 100 mg of EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) every day.

There are two easily available supplements that approximately match this dosage:

- **Infantem** made by Pharmamark. Each capsule contains 400 mg DHA and 50 mg EPA. Taking 2 capsules per day will result in an overall dose of 800 mg DHA and 100 mg EPA. The oil contained in the capsules is an algal oil that is vegetarian and sustainable. The mercury content is negligible. Infantem can be ordered on-line from www.infantem.com.au
- **Omega Brain** by Blackmores. Each capsule contains 500 mg DHA and 100 mg EPA. Taking 2 capsules per day will result in an overall dose of 1,000 mg DHA and 200 mg EPA. The oil contained in the capsules is a concentrated fish oil. The mercury content is negligible. Omega Brain is available in most pharmacies and can be ordered on-line from www.blackmores.com.au

Taking a little more than the suggested dose is entirely safe. The maximum safe dose of DHA plus EPA in pregnancy is 3,000 mg.

If women with low omega-3 status also wish to take a pregnancy multi-vitamin and mineral supplement, it is easiest to choose a supplement without omega-3 fatty acids together with one of the above choices. A list of pregnancy supplements without omega-3 fatty acids is available [here](#).

If a pregnancy supplement with omega-3 fatty acids is used, then it will be important to carefully check the label and add up the DHA and EPA contents of the supplements. Few choices get close to the suggested dose of 800 mg DHA and 100 mg EPA.

- e.g. one option is the combination of Blackmores Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Gold as well as Omega Brain. The recommended 2 capsules per day of Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Gold supply 250 mg DHA and 50 mg EPA. Adding these to one capsule of Omega Brain containing 500 mg DHA and 100 mg EPA, provides a total of 750 mg DHA and 150 mg EPA.

If women have moderate omega-3 levels (between 3.7 and 4.3%), no action is required. If already taking omega-3 fatty acids as part of a multivitamin and mineral supplement or a standalone supplement, this may continue.

If women have sufficient omega-3 levels (above 4.3%), omega-3 supplements are not required and provide no benefit to risk of early preterm birth. If already taking omega-3 fatty acids as part of a multivitamin and mineral supplement and wish to continue, the dose of DHA+ EPA should not exceed 250mg per day. The risk of early preterm birth is low and additional supplementation may increase this risk. If women are already taking omega-3 supplements, it is advisable to stop. If women wish to take pregnancy vitamin and mineral supplements, it is best to take one without omega-3 fatty acids.

A list of supplements that do not contain omega-3 fatty acids is included [here](#).