OMEGA 3 FATTY ACIDS

What are Omega 3 fatty acids?
Omega 3’s are polyunsaturated fatty acids and found in 3 forms:
- ALA or alpha-linolenic acid
- DHA or docosahexaenoic acid
- EPA or eicosapentaenoic acid

The body can make EPA and DHA from ALA but the process is not very effective and therefore it remains fundamental to include omega 3 rich foods as part of your diet. EPA and DHA are found in oily fish e.g. salmon, halibut and shellfish while ALA is found primarily in plant-based foods such as flaxseed, nuts and chia seeds.

How do Omega 3 Fatty Acids work?
Omega 3 fatty acids have a number of important functions in the body including cell growth, brain development and reducing inflammation. For athletes undergoing long duration or intensive training periods, omega 3’s have been linked to an improved inflammatory response and reduction DOMS.

High Omega 3 intakes have also been associated with:
- Improved blood flow and oxygen delivery
- Improved immune function
- Improved cognitive function and mood
- Healing soft tissue injuries

Potential performance benefits
It is not yet clear if omega 3’s directly influence athletic performance. They may however indirectly affect training by supporting recovery, allowing athletes to train to their full potential.

What is the recommended daily intake?
Health Canada recommends at least 2 x 75g servings of oily fish per week which would provide about 300-450mg of EPA/DHA per day. Recent evidence has suggested a higher dose of 1-2g omega 3 (with less than 3g/day) to help reduce exercise-induced inflammation.

How do you take Omega 3’s?
Eat omega 3 rich foods every day and consider an omega 3 supplement (tested and purified of heavy metals such as mercury and PCBs), if you don’t regularly eat fish.

Klean athlete and Nordic Naturals manufacture an NSF tested omega 3 supplement. Jamieson is considered a low risk manufacturer of specific vitamins and minerals but is not NSF tested.

Klean: 400mg EPA & 200mg DHA per capsule
Nordic Naturals: 400mg EPA & 200mg DHA per capsule + 500iu of vitamin D
Jamieson: 750mg EPA & 500mg DHA per teaspoon

General health: Take 2 tablets (or 1 teaspoon oil) daily during a hard training block
Injury: Please see your Sport Dietitian for recommendations

Are there any side effects of health risks?
Some athletes have reported bloating, acid reflux, nausea and diarrhoea but if experienced, taking with a meal and starting with one tablet per day for 2 weeks can reduce these side effects. For athletes that have had a history of blood clotting issues, it is recommended to talk with you GP prior to starting supplementation.

**Please speak with your Sports Dietitian for further information**