



This information sheet is about fish oils, Omega-3 and how they can influence your cancer risk. It is based on research evidence and has been written for the general audience.

Key Message

Omega-3 oils are good for your health and can reduce the risk of cancer, heart disease and some other inflammatory diseases

Omega -3 oils are linked with a range of health benefits, such as lowering the risk of heart disease and relieving rheumatoid arthritis and inflammatory bowel disease. There is also some proof that these oils may help to prevent some cancers.

Omega-3 fatty acids are found in oily types of fish such as salmon, tuna, mackerel and sardines. They are also in canola oils, soybeans and soy oil, linseeds and flaxseed oil, walnuts and walnut oil.

It is not clear why fish-eaters have a lower incidence (rates) of bowel cancer than those who rarely eat fish. It may be because they generally eat a healthier diet and eat less red meat and processed meat. Eating a lot of red and processed meat is linked with a higher risk of cancer.

Although the links between Omega-3 oils and reduced cancer is not strong, because of the health benefits of eating fish, especially oily fish, the Cancer Society recommends eating fish twice a week.

Other ways of including omega -3 oils in your diet are using canola and soy oils for cooking, eating soy and linseed breads and adding walnuts in baking, salads and as a snack.