

Vegan Fats Of Life, Part 3

Now that we've covered the importance of Essential Fatty Acids in the Vegan diet, and the difference between the different types of fats, let's round this discussion out by focusing on the healthy Essential Fatty Acids.

They're called the Omegas, specifically **Omega 3** and **Omega 6**.

Why should you care about these important fats? As you learned earlier, Essential Fatty Acids nourish your skin, hair, and nails. They also help to strengthen the immune system. And if that's not enough, they also prevent the growth of bacteria and viruses, **which will not thrive in the presence of these oxygen-holding fats**. Eating Essential Fatty Acids also helps to increase the rate at which the body burns fat, bringing your body to its natural weight. In fact, there are so many wonderful benefits to eating the right fats that it's hard to narrow it down for our purposes here!

The Real Secret: Prostaglandins

There are two main polyunsaturated fats, and they are called Omega 6 (linoleic) and Omega 3 (linolenic). When you eat these healthy fats, your body immediately goes to work to magically transform them into extremely active hormone-like substances called **prostaglandins**.

These prostaglandins are **the outcome of a conversion** that takes place in your body as a result of eating these polyunsaturated fats.

When you eat foods containing **Omega 6** fats, your body will break these down into more "active" substances, becoming more and more unsaturated as they go along. (And as we've already learned, the more unsaturated, the better.) Eventually, they are transformed into **Series 1 prostaglandins**.

Ah-ha! Now we are getting to the great benefit of these fats...

Series 1 prostaglandins are essential for healthy blood, such as keeping the blood thin (which prevents clots and blockages), relaxing blood vessels, and lowering blood pressure, among other things.

When you eat food containing **Omega 3** fats, your body will break these down into more "active" substances, also becoming more and more unsaturated as it goes along (just like the Omega 6's).

However, the Omega 3's are eventually transformed into **Series 3 prostaglandins**. These are essential for proper brain function and coordination, among other things.

So in order to put your body to work making these **ultra-important prostaglandins**, it's vital to eat the Omega 3's and 6's that will create them.

Currently, researchers are advising that we ingest twice as many Omega 6 fats as Omega 3 Essential Fatty Acids. There's a bit of confusion out there about Omega 6 fats. Omega 6 fats are very important to our diet, but the trick is to be sure you're eating the **healthy Omega 6 fats**.

What is the easiest way to ensure you are eating the foods which contain these **healthy Omegas** and in the proper amounts you need.

One way to meet the needs for both Omega 3 and healthy Omega 6 Essential Fatty Acids is to **combine seeds**. Sunflower and sesame seeds are good sources of Omega 6, pumpkin seeds provide reasonable quantities of both, while flax seeds are the richest in Omega 3 (containing 50% Omega 3 and 10% Omega 6).

So when you put them all together, you end up with **twice as much Omega 6 as Omega 3 Essential Fatty Acids**, the perfect ratio you're searching for.

Your Mission...

...should you choose to accept it:

Combine seeds for the perfect amounts of healthy Omega 6 and Omega 3 Essential Fatty Acids.

Mix **2 parts flax seeds** with **one part each sunflower, sesame and pumpkin seeds**. The easiest, most delicious and most satisfying way to eat these seeds is to grind **two tablespoons per day** in a coffee grinder and add them to your daily salads or vegetable dishes. (If you're a fan of nutritional yeast, add some to "up" the flavor and nutritional value.) Be sure to keep your seeds away from heat, light and the air. I keep mine in the freezer.

Alternatively, just add **one tablespoon of seeds**, and make up the difference with a salad dressing using **one tablespoon of cold-pressed hemp seed oil** (yes, it's from the marijuana plant, but it won't give you the munchies). Hemp seed oil contains 59% Omega 6 and 19% Omega 3 Essential Fatty Acids, meaning twice the amount of **HEALTHY Omega 6's**, just as current research recommends. (Always choose cold-pressed oils...the cold pressing prevents damage to the Essential Fatty Acids caused by heat processing.) Be sure the cold-pressed oils you buy are made from organic seeds. Your oil should come in a light-proof container to protect it and keep it fresh.

So now you know how to stock your body with the all-important Omega Essential Fatty Acids.

Yay!

But there's just one more thing that you need to be aware of...

da...da...da...dummmmm

TRANS FATS EEEEEEK!

You have probably heard of “refined oils”, but you may not know how truly **unhealthy** refining can be. The refining and processing of vegetable oils can change the very nature of the polyunsaturated oils.

For example, how is margarine made? The vegetable oil is turned into a hard fat. This process is called “hydrogenation”. Although the fat is still **technically** polyunsaturated, the body cannot make use of it. Even worse, it blocks the body's ability to use healthy polyunsaturated oils (Essential Fatty Acids). This kind of fat is called a “trans” fat because its nature has been changed.

Trans fats are like little monsters. They are kinked -- like the unsaturated variety of Essential Fatty Acids -- **but those kinks occur artificially**. Further, these kinked fats are not flexible and are **permanently bent** in this position. Their permanent shape is not found in nature, so they can wreak havoc in your body.

Avoid refined and processed oils; avoid those hard “saturated” fats; avoid fried foods, burnt or browned fat; avoid all hydrogenated and trans fats. They can lead to many degenerative diseases. In general, if something is processed, it stands a better chance of holding onto those fats you want to avoid. Check those labels!!

Instead, eat those healthy Essential Fatty Acids and watch your skin, hair and nails change before your very eyes. Watch as your body steadily moves to its natural weight. Watch your health and immune system become stronger. Watch as your memory improves.

Fats are good for you. Three cheers for fats!

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