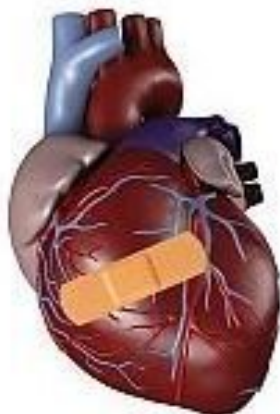


Omega-3 PUFA reduce heart failure

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Singapore: Omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs), namely DHA and EPA that are found in fatty fish, are associated with lower risk of heart failure mortality in adults with chronic heart failure or who have experienced a heart attack. These fatty acids may also benefit young adults at risk of cardiovascular disease due to impaired fetal growth and low birth weight.

EPA and DHA might also reduce the risk of developing this condition following a heart attack, according to a study of 712 adults in Japan. Those with the highest levels of EPA and DHA in their blood survived significantly longer without developing heart failure compared to patients with the lowest third of these fatty acids.

PUFA newsletter editor, Ms Joyce Nettleton, said that, "Higher levels of EPA and DHA may be beneficial in reducing the risk of heart failure, hospitalization for heart failure and death from any cause in people who have had a heart attack."

Moreover, omega-3 PUFAs may benefit young people at risk of cardiovascular disease in adulthood due to impaired fetal growth or low birth weight. A study of 1,573 young adults in Finland who had impaired fetal growth and thereby, increased carotid intima-media thickness (cIMT) - a risk factor for heart disease - showed that those with higher intakes of omega-3s over six years had significantly lower cIMT values compared to those with lower intakes of omega-3 PUFAs.

"This suggests that childhood is not too soon to increase the consumption of omega-3 fatty acids to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease in adulthood," Ms Nettleton concludes.