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### *Why Omega-3's?*

Fish oil is known to play a role in preventing Alzheimer's disease, and UCLA researchers have discovered why.

Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), an omega-3 fatty acid found in fish oil, increases the production of LR11, a protein that destroys a protein that forms the "plaques" associated with Alzheimer's disease.

LR11 is also found in low levels in Alzheimer's patients, and since this protein helps prevent the toxic plaques that are thought to harm neurons in your brain, it is believed to be a factor in causing the disease.

The researchers examined both fish oil in the diet and DHA administered directly to neurons grown in a laboratory.

Even low doses of DHA increased LR11 in rat neurons, and dietary fish oil increased LR11 in brains of rats or mice that had been genetically altered to develop Alzheimer's disease, researchers said.

DHA also had a beneficial impact on human neuronal cells in culture.

The researchers concluded that high levels of DHA lead to abundant LR11, which seems to protect against Alzheimer's. Conversely, low levels of LR11 lead to the formation of beta amyloid plaques that harm your brain.

What's left to be determined, according to the researchers, is what dose is most effective. In areas where dietary DHA is high, a small dose may be beneficial, while in the United States, where there's a deficiency of DHA, a larger dose may be necessary.

**Sources Eurekalert December 25, 2007 Journal of Neuroscience December 26, 2007, 27(52):14299-14307**

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