

# Fish oil may prevent muscle loss in breast cancer survivors

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(PhysOrg.com) -- Fish oil supplements may help prevent muscle loss in breast cancer survivors, according to new University of Queensland research.

PhD student Cameron McDonald from the School of Human Movement Studies has been invited to Malaysia to present his research at the upcoming Universitas 21 Graduate Research Conference on Food.

“Loss of muscle mass shortly after cancer treatment is a common problem for [breast cancer survivors](#) and research indicates that loss of muscle may increase the onset and exacerbation of obesity-related chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes,” Mr McDonald said.

“Exercise is effective in rebuilding lost muscle after it has occurred, however it is often hard to maintain over time.

“If [fish oil](#) supplementation is effective in preventing [muscle loss](#) before it occurs, or even more effective when used in conjunction with exercise, it could significantly decrease the risk of survivors developing a chronic disease,” he said.

Muscle mass loss in [breast cancer](#) survivors may be partly due to the presence of chronic inflammation, which causes a breakdown in muscle tissue. Fish oils interfere with inflammation, thereby reducing its effect.

Research is still in its early stages and clinical trials are set to commence later in the year.

Mr McDonald is one of two UQ research higher degree students to receive a grant to attend the conference, which focuses on interdisciplinary approaches to some of the most pressing food-related questions facing humankind.

Provided by University of Queensland

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