

# Fish oil has no effect on depression in pregnancy

April 11 2013

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Fish oil supplements do not prevent depression in late pregnancy and postpartum in women at risk of depression, according to a study in the April issue of the *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

(HealthDay)—Fish oil supplements do not prevent depression in late pregnancy and postpartum in women at risk of depression, according to a study in the April issue of the *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

Ellen L. Mozurkewich, M.D., from the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor, and colleagues randomly assigned 126 women in early pregnancy at risk of depression to fish oil rich in eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), fish oil rich in docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), or soy oil placebo. One hundred eighteen of the participants completed the trial.

The researchers found that serum EPA and serum DHA levels were

significantly increased in the EPA-rich and DHA-rich fish oil groups, respectively. However, the three groups had similar depression scores at 26 to 28 weeks gestation, 34 to 36 weeks gestation, and at six to eight weeks' postpartum. There was a negative correlation between serum DHA levels at 34 to 36 weeks and scores on the Beck Depression Inventory at the same time point, according to the study.

"In summary, we found no benefit for EPA-rich fish oil or DHA-rich [fish oil](#) supplementation to prevent depressive symptoms in pregnancy and postpartum," Mozurkewich and colleagues conclude. "We demonstrated that maternal serum DHA concentrations at 34 to 36 weeks were significantly predictive of [depression](#) scores at the same time point. Further research is needed to clarify the mechanism underlying this relationship."

The Nordic Naturals Corporation donated both active supplements and placebos.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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