

Eating fish, nuts may not help thinking skills after all

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Contrary to earlier studies, new research suggests that omega-3 fatty acids may not benefit thinking skills. The study is published in the September 25, 2013, online issue of *Neurology*, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology. Omega-3s are found in fatty fish such as salmon and in nuts.

"There has been a lot of interest in omega-3s as a way to prevent or delay [cognitive decline](#), but unfortunately our study did not find a protective effect in older women. In addition, most [randomized trials](#) of omega-3 supplements have not found an effect," said study author Eric Ammann, MS, of the University of Iowa in Iowa City. "However, we do not recommend that people change their diet based on these results.

Researchers continue to study the relationship between omega-3s and the health of the heart, blood vessels, and brain. We know that fish and nuts can be healthy alternatives to red meat and full-fat dairy products, which are high in saturated fats."

The study involved 2,157 women age 65 to 80 who were enrolled in the Women's Health Initiative clinical trials of hormone therapy. The women were given annual tests of thinking and [memory skills](#) for an average of six years. Blood tests were taken to measure the amount of omega-3s in the participants' blood before the start of the study.

The researchers found no difference between the women with high and low levels of omega-3s in the blood at the time of the first memory tests. There was also no difference between the two groups in how fast their

thinking skills declined over time.

Provided by American Academy of Neurology

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