

Why fish is good for your brain: Study suggests it can make Alzheimer's far less likely

- Fatty acid found in fish and seafood boosts memory function by 15 per cent
- Fish-rich diet important for maintaining optimal brain health and preventing onset of dementia

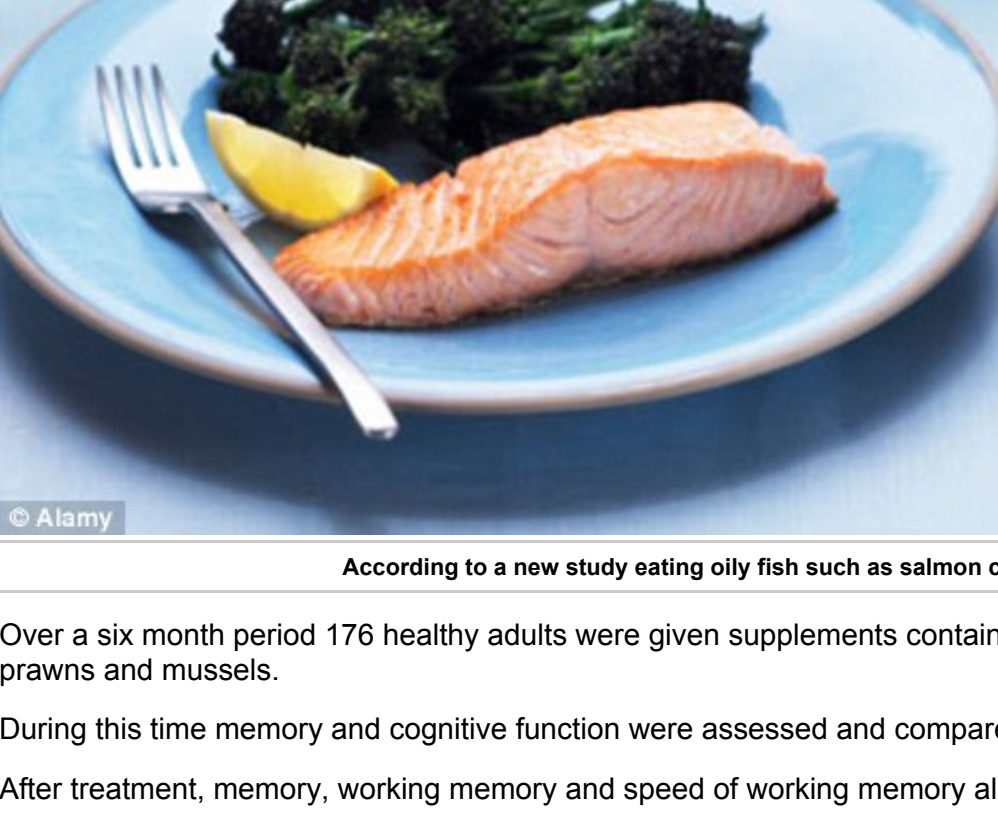
By [Sadie Whitelocks](#)

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Eating oily fish such as salmon and trout can significantly improve your memory say scientists.

A new study found that a fatty acid found in fish and seafood can boost memory function by 15 per cent.

Scientists are now highlighting the importance of a fish-rich diet for maintaining optimal brain health and preventing the onset of dementia.



According to a new study eating oily fish such as salmon can significantly improve your memory and help prevent the onset of dementia

Over a six month period 176 healthy adults were given supplements containing DHA - an Omega-3 fatty acid found in foods such as salmon, mackerel, sardines, trout, prawns and mussels.

During this time memory and cognitive function were assessed and compared to a placebo group.

After treatment, memory, working memory and speed of working memory all showed significant improvements.

It is believed that DHA could be key in preventing Alzheimer's disease, one of the most common forms of dementia, characterised by a decline in mental abilities, such as memory and reasoning and often associated with increasing age.

Lead researcher Professor Welma Stonehouse of Massey University in New Zealand said: 'This is the first robust study to show that a DHA-rich supplement can improve some aspects of memory functioning in young healthy adults.



DHA - an Omega-3 fatty acid found in fish and seafood is one of the most highly concentrated fats in the brain

'The cognitive functions shown to be affected by the DHA-rich fish oil, namely memory and working memory, are among the most important functions of our brains for numerous everyday activities, such as working, driving, shopping, studying, playing sports, etc.

'Maintaining brain health and getting your brain to perform at its optimal capacity is just as vital as maintaining physical wellbeing and health.'

DHA, is one of the most highly concentrated fats in the brain and known to play a vital role in the structure and functioning of the brain.

But as the body cannot effectively make this fatty acid it must be consumed as part of the diet.

Researchers highlighted that as many people fail to eat enough fish and seafood, the brain's performance is potentially compromised.

The study showed that male participants who took a DHA supplement demonstrated 15 per cent faster working memory while women had a seven per cent improvement in the speed of episodic memory.

Professor Stonehouse added: 'These findings contribute to the growing body of research showing that omega-3's play a very important role in brain function throughout the life cycle, even in healthy cognitively intact individuals.'

This is one of the few studies to investigate the effects of DHA on cognitive function in healthy adults with no pre-existing cognitive disorder.

Dementia affects around 570,000 people in England, with Alzheimer's disease responsible for around 60 per cent of dementia cases.

The NHS states a healthy diet should include at least two portions of fish a week, including one of oily fish.

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I have a book extolling the virtues of Omega-3 fatty acid found in oily fish. I bought it in New Zealand where it was published in 1984!

- Terry McCarthy, Chiang Mai, Thailand, 30/11/2011 08:04

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Ever seen a salmon forget to swim up river :)

- Sally, Auckland NZ, 30/11/2011 01:29

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176 subjects; presumably this includes the control group, so 88 people took the nutrition supplement. Not exactly a stunningly large number. Do you tell us what the likelihood is of this result appearing by chance? Of course not; that would spoil the story. I can tell you, though, that with so tiny a sample the likelihood is very high. Tells us nothing.

- Harry, Manchester, 29/11/2011 23:23

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alzheimer's disease is thought to be an inflammatory disease which is why fish oil helps - it lowers inflammation in the body, good for skin conditions such as eczema, joint pains etc etc. also why the B vitamins were found to prevent alzheimers in research published last year - they lowered homocystine in the body which causes inflammation

- Christine, Coventry, 29/11/2011 22:33

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My mother ate fish regularly her whole life - she got dementia. I think that depression is often the cause of dementia. You need a lot of laughter in your life. Governments could help by lowering taxes for hard-working people - they would find the health care of the population would improve. Probably more than when people stop smoking. And depression is linked to smoking as well.

- Mary, Canada, 29/11/2011 21:59

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Nothing new here, What about Hemp seed and cannabis? Flax seed and certain nuts. These all contain omega3, cannabis and hemp seed contains omega 3, 6 & 9 in the correct portions that our bodies require. It is also a well know fact that cannabis helps people with Alzheimer and Parkinson etc.

- wayne harrison, Sutton in Ashfield, UK, 29/11/2011 21:48

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"It is believed that DHA could be key in preventing Alzheimer's disease".....I agree that DHA rich fish oil will help the memory but it will not, by itself, prevent Alzheimer's. This is because Alzheimer's is mainly caused by aluminium and mercury. So the way to prevent Alzheimer's is to make sure you do not use any products that contain these two toxic metals. The products with the highest amounts of aluminium and mercury are:- aluminium cookware, amalgam tooth fillings, vaccinations, antiperspirants and large fish like tuna and shark.

- Michael Haymar, Oxford UK, 29/11/2011 21:24

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I cant stand fishes to eat, she tried to make it for roast sunday lunch and had gravy to but i woodnt eat it again, roasted fish fingers.

- harry krappa, on the throne, 29/11/2011 19:38

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