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*A recent study of a large population of women showed that regular consumption of fish and EPA and DHA (omega-3 fatty acids found in fish) was associated with a significant decrease in the risk of age-related macular degeneration, a major cause of blindness.*

## OMEGA 3 FATTY ACIDS IN FISH OIL REDUCE INCIDENCE OF AGE-RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD), a major cause of blindness, is estimated to affect 9 million U.S. adults. Evidence from observational and epidemiologic studies suggest an inverse relation between regular dietary intake of fish and DHA and EPA and the risk of advanced AMD.

In a recent study published online in the *Archives of Ophthalmology*, researchers examined whether the intake of omega-3 fatty acids and fish affects the incidence of AMD in women.

A detailed food-frequency questionnaire was completed by 38,022 women at an average age of 54.6 years. All women were free of a diagnosis of AMD at the beginning of the trial. After an average of 10 years follow-up, 235 cases of AMD were confirmed.

Women in the highest third of intake of DHA, compared to those in the lowest, had a 38% decreased risk of AMD. Those with the highest third of intake of EPA had a 34% decrease risk of AMD. Similarly to intakes of individual omega-3 fatty acids, women who consumed 1 or more servings of fish per week had a 42% decreased risk in comparison to those who ate less than 1 serving per month.

The results from this prospective study from a large population of women indicate that regular consumption of fish and omega-3 fatty acids from fish (EPA and DHA) significantly reduces the risk of AMD. This is some of the strongest evidence to date that support a role for long-chain fatty omega-3 fatty acids in the primary prevention of AMD, and possibly a reduction in the number of people who ultimately have advanced AMD, potentially leading to blindness.

*William G Christen, ScD et al. Dietary omega-3 Fatty Acid and Fish Intake and Incident Age-Related Macular Degeneration in Women. Arch Ophthalmol. Published online March 14, 2011. doi:10.1001/archophthalmol.2011.34*