

An Effective Combination for Holistic Health: Omega-3 Fatty Acid and Ayurvedic Herbs

Dr. Navneet*

*Assistant Professor, Dept. of Rasashastra & Bhaishajyakalpana, Dronacharya Ayurvedic Educational Institute & Hospital, Shakumbhari devi road, Khushalipur, Uttar Pradesh 247662.
Mob- 82669 00004 Email- dr.navneetbhardwaj1995@gmail.com

Abstract-

Essential nutrients, omega-3 fatty acids are well-known for their many health advantages, which include heart health, cognitive function, and anti-inflammatory qualities. Omega-3 fatty acids are polyunsaturated fats that are vital to human health and have been extensively researched for their possible advantages in neuroprotection, inflammation reduction, cardiovascular health, and general physiological well-being. Although fish oil has historically been the source, flaxseeds, chia seeds, and walnuts are all common plant-based omega-3 sources. Because of their anti-inflammatory, cardiovascular, and cognitive health advantages, omega-3 fatty acids are essential nutrients. Herbs and plant-based diets are natural sources of omega-3 according to Ayurveda, the traditional Indian medical system. This study examines the synergistic benefits of omega-3-rich Ayurvedic herbs and how they can improve general health. Additionally, based on current scientific research, this study examines the physiological roles, dietary sources, biochemical makeup, and therapeutic importance of omega-3 fatty acids.

Keywords- Omega-3, fatty acid, Ayurvedic herbs, Health benefits.

Introduction-

The ancient Indian medical system known as Ayurveda provides a distinctive viewpoint by enhancing the therapeutic effects of meals high in omega-3 fatty acids with powerful Ayurvedic botanicals. "Healthy fats" like omega-3 fatty acids may help keep your heart healthy. The reduction of triglycerides is one important advantage. Certain kinds of omega-3s include ALA (found in plants) and DHA and EPA (found in seafood). Fatty fish (such as salmon and mackerel), flaxseed, and chia seeds are a few items that might help you increase your intake of omega-3 fatty acids.¹ Alpha-Linolenic Acid (ALA), Eicosapentaenoic Acid (EPA), and Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA) are the primary components of omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for preserving metabolic equilibrium and cellular function. Since the human body is unable to synthesis them and must get them through diet or supplements, they are regarded as essential nutrients. Polyunsaturated fats called omega-3 fatty acids, or omega-3s, serve a number of vital bodily purposes. Omega-3s are essential for survival, but your body is unable to make enough of them. Omega-3 fatty acids must therefore be obtained through diet because they are necessary nutrients.²

What are fatty acids?

Fatty acids can be divided into two categories: unsaturated fat and saturated fat. The subsequent breakdown of unsaturated fat produces monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. You frequently find these terms on nutrition labels. Made comprised of hydrogen, oxygen, and carbon atoms, fatty acids resemble chains. With oxygen and hydrogen atoms clinging to open slots, carbon atoms make up the chain's backbone. No more slots are available in a saturated fat. There is one open position in a monounsaturated fat. A polyunsaturated fat contains several open slots. Due to their tendency to raise the risk of heart disease and stroke, saturated fats are commonly referred to as "bad" or "unhealthy" fats.³ When consumed in moderation, unsaturated fats—polyunsaturated and monounsaturated support heart health, which is why they are referred to be "good" or "healthy" fats. As a type of polyunsaturated fat, omega-3s are better for you than saturated fat.

Omega-3 Dietary Sources

- **Marine Sources:** EPA and DHA are abundant in the liver oil of fatty fish, including cod, mackerel, sardines, and salmon.
- **Plant-Based Sources:** Walnuts, hemp seeds, chia seeds, and flaxseeds all contain ALA, which the body partially transforms into EPA and DHA.
- **Fortified Foods:** Omega-3 is frequently added to dairy products, eggs, and plant-based oils to guarantee sufficient consumption.⁴

Advantages of Fatty Acids Omega-3

The three main components of omega-3 fatty acids EPA (Eicosapentaenoic Acid), DHA (Docosahexaenoic Acid), and ALA (Alpha-Linolenic Acid) are essential for general health. Principal advantages consist of:⁵

- **Heart Health:** helps avoid cardiovascular illnesses, lower blood pressure, and lower cholesterol.
- **Brain Function:** increases brain clarity, lowers the risk of neurodegenerative disorders, and improves cognitive performance.
- **Anti-Inflammatory Properties:** helps control autoimmune diseases, arthritis, and other inflammatory illnesses by reducing inflammation.
- **Skin and Hair Health:** strengthens hair, nourishes skin, and delays the onset of premature aging.
- **Mood Regulation:** Helps in managing anxiety, depression, and overall mental well-being.

Medicinal Plants That Enhance Omega-3 Fatty Acids ⁶

1. Flaxseeds (Alsi - *Linum usitatissimum*)

Flaxseeds, a strong source of ALA, promote anti-inflammatory reactions, cognitive function, and cardiovascular health. Use in Ayurveda: Ground flaxseeds are frequently added to herbal formulations or taken with warm water.

अलसी मधुरा तिक्ता स्निग्ध पाके कटुगुरुः। उष्णा दृक्छुक्रवातघ्नी कफपित्तविनाशिनी॥ ⁷

अलसी मदगन्धा स्यान्मधुरा बलकारिका। कफवातकरी चेषत् पित्तहृत् कुष्ठवातनुत्॥ ⁸

2. Chia Seeds (*Salvia hispanica*)

Rich in ALA and antioxidants, chia seeds support heart health, digestion, and vitality. Ayurvedic use: To improve bioavailability, it is soaked before eating and added to herbal liquids.

3. Hemp Seeds (Bhanga - *Cannabis sativa*)

supports skin health and immunity by having a balanced ratio of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. Use in Ayurveda: Frequently added to herbal oils or pastes for all-encompassing nourishment.

भंगा कफहारि तिक्ता ग्राहिणी पाचनी लघुः। तीक्ष्णोष्णा पित्तला मोहमदवाग्वह्निवर्द्धिनी॥ ⁹

भंगा तु दीपनी रुच्या ग्राहिणी पाचनी लघुः। निद्रापित्तप्रदोष्णा च कामदा कफवातजित्॥ ¹⁰

4. Walnuts (Akhrot - *Juglans regia*)

Walnuts are a great Ayurvedic herb for enhancing the brain since they contain vital polyphenols and ALA. Ayurvedic use: Suggested as a daily dietary supplement for cardiovascular and mental well-being.

अक्षोटो मधुरो बलकारको स्निग्धो वातपित्तजित्। रक्तप्रदोषप्रशमनः शीतलः कफकोपनः॥ ¹¹

अक्षोटकं सरं स्निग्धं मधुरं रसपाकयोः। गुरूष्णं बंहणं वृष्यं बलकारकं विष्टम्भि रोचनम्॥

हृद्यं क्षयास्रपवनदाहघ्नं कफपित्तलम्॥ ¹²

5. Guggul (*Commiphora wightii*)

Although guggul is well recognized for controlling cholesterol, it also improves lipid metabolism and promotes omega-3's anti-inflammatory properties. Use in Ayurveda: Frequently used with other herbs to treat lipid abnormalities.

गुग्गुलुः कटुतिक्तफ्रोणः कफमारुतकासजित्। कृमिवातोदरप्लीहशोफार्शोग्नौ रसायनः।

गुग्गुलुर्भूमिजस्तित्फ्रः कटूष्णः कफवातजित्। उमाप्रिय श्य भूतघ्नो मेध्यः सौरभ्यदः सदा॥ ¹³

गुग्गुलुर्विशदस्तित्को वीर्योष्णो मधुरः सरः। भग्नसंधानकृद् वृष्यः सूक्ष्मः स्वर्यो रसायनः॥

दीपनः पिच्छलो बलकारकः कफवातव्रणापचीः। मेदोमेहास्रवातास्रक्लेदकुष्ठाममारुतान्॥ ¹⁴

6. Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*)

Ashwagandha, well-known for its adaptogenic qualities, improves brain function and lowers stress. When paired with omega-3, it promotes mental toughness and cognitive health.

अश्वगन्धानिलश्लेष्मश्चित्रशोथक्षयापहा। बलकारका रसायनी तिक्ता कषायोष्णातिशुक्रला॥ ¹⁵

अश्वगन्धा कटूष्णा स्यात्तिक्ता च मदगन्धिका। बलकारका वातहरा हन्ति कासश्वासक्षयव्रणान्॥ ¹⁶

7. Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)

Turmeric's main ingredient, curcumin, has potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant qualities. It aids in the fight against joint pain and chronic inflammation when combined with omega-3.

हरिद्रा कटुका तिक्ता देहवर्णविधायिका। उष्णा रूक्षा शोधनी चस्त्रीणां वैभूषणं मता॥

कफं वातं रक्तदोषं कुष्ठं कण्डूं प्रमेहकम्। त्वग्दोषं च व्रणं शोफं पाण्डुरोगं कृमीन्विषम्॥

पीनसं चारुचि पित्तमपचीं चैव नाशयेत्॥ ¹⁷

8. Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*)

Brahmi is a great brain tonic that improves mental clarity, focus, and memory. It can be very helpful for neuroprotection and brain health when combined with omega-3.

ब्राह्मी सौम्या रसे तिक्ता शोफपाण्डुज्वरापहा॥

दीपनी कुष्ठकण्डूघ्नी प्लीहवातबलासजित्।¹⁸

9. Sea Buckthorn (*Hippophae rhamnoides*)

includes omega-3 fatty acids as well as omega-6, -7, and -9 fatty acids. used historically for cardiovascular support, wound healing, and skin health. rich in carotenoids and vitamin C.

10. Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*)

Shatavari, which is well-known for its restorative qualities, promotes hormonal equilibrium and general vitality, amplifying the health advantages of omega-3 for women.

शतावरी गुरुः शीता तिक्ता स्वाद्वी रसायनी। मेधाग्निपुष्टिदा स्निग्ध नेत्रया गुल्मातिसारजित्।।

शुक्रस्तन्यकरी बलकारका वातपित्ताडुशोथजित्। महाशतावरी मेध्या हृद्या वृष्या रसायनी।।

शीतवीर्या निहन्त्यशोऽग्रहणीनयनामयान्। तदघड्दुरद्विदोषघ्ने लघुरर्शः क्षयापहा।।¹⁹

11. Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*)

Among leafy vegetables, it has one of the highest natural concentrations of ALA. Because of its anti-diabetic, wound-healing, and antioxidant qualities, it is used in traditional medicine. includes flavonoids, vitamins, and minerals that support general health.

घोलिकाम्ला सरा चोष्णा वातकृतकफपित्तहृत्। वाक्दोषव्रणगुल्मघ्नी श्वासकासप्रमेहनुत्।।

पित्तलाम्लाग्रहण्यर्षःकुष्ठातीसारनाशिनी।²⁰

12. Perilla (*Perilla frutescens*)

It contains between 50 and 60 percent ALA. Because of its anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and neuroprotective properties, it is utilized in traditional Chinese medicine. aids in the treatment of respiratory disorders and allergies.

How to Use Ayurvedic Herbs and Omega-3 in Everyday Life²¹

- **Herbal Omega-3 Smoothie:** For a nutrient-dense beverage, blend almond milk, turmeric, Brahmi, and flaxseeds or chia seeds.
- **Golden Omega Tea:** Make ashwagandha and turmeric tea, then drink it with a teaspoon of flaxseed oil.
- **Ayurvedic Omega Capsules:** For easy absorption, choose herbal supplements that blend omega-3 with Ayurvedic medicines.
- **Nutrient-Rich Meals:** Supplement herbal-infused dishes with foods high in omega-3, such as hemp seeds and walnuts.

Physiological Functions and Health Advantages^{22,23,24}

1. Cardiovascular Health

It has been demonstrated that omega-3 fatty acids lower blood pressure, inhibit arterial plaque accumulation, and lower triglyceride levels. Regular consumption of omega-3 fatty acids lowers the incidence of stroke and cardiovascular disease, according to a meta-analysis of clinical trials.

2. Neuroprotection and Mental Abilities

DHA is crucial for brain growth and function and makes up a significant portion of neuronal membranes. According to studies, taking omega-3 supplements may lower the risk of neurological disorders like Alzheimer's and decrease cognitive decline in older adults.

3. Impact on Immunomodulation and Anti-Inflammation

Omega-3 fatty acids are essential for controlling chronic inflammation because they block pro-inflammatory cytokines and eicosanoids. Clinical studies demonstrate how beneficial they are for ailments like asthma, inflammatory bowel illness, and rheumatoid arthritis.

4. Mental Health and Mood Regulation

Research indicates that omega-3 fatty acids may help reduce the symptoms of anxiety and depression and stabilize mood. Studies have shown that blood omega-3 levels are frequently lower in those with major depressive illness.

5. Metabolic Health and Obesity Management

By controlling fat metabolism, omega-3 fatty acids improve insulin sensitivity and may help with weight management. Research suggests that there may be advantages in lowering the risk of metabolic syndrome and type 2 diabetes.

The Combined Benefits of Ayurvedic Herbs and Omega-3²⁵

1. Brain and Cognitive Health

Memory, attention, and neuroprotection are improved when omega-3-rich diets are combined with Ayurvedic nootropic herbs such as ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*) and brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*).

2. Heart and Circulatory Health

An Ayurvedic heart tonic called arjuna (*Terminalia arjuna*) enhances cardiovascular health and lowers arterial inflammation by combining with omega-3.

3. Joint and Inflammation Support

Because of its high curcumin concentration, turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) helps reduce inflammation and joint discomfort by enhancing omega-3 fatty acids.

4. Gut and Metabolic Health

Triphala, a blend of three potent fruits, improves digestion and detoxification, enhancing omega-3 absorption.

Clinical Studies and Findings^{26,27,28}

- Omega-3 supplementation dramatically reduced the incidence of major cardiovascular events, according to a randomized controlled experiment that was published in the New England Journal of Medicine.
- According to a research published in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, taking EPA supplements helped people with depression symptoms.
- According to research published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, older persons' cognitive function is enhanced by DHA supplementation.

Discussion-

Omega-3 fatty acid-rich medicinal herbs are a great substitute for people who don't eat fish or fish oil. They include bioactive substances with potential for medicinal use in addition to necessary fatty acids. Many chronic diseases can be avoided and general health can be enhanced by including these plants in the diet or employing them in traditional medicine. Human health depends on omega-3 fatty acids, such as docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), and alpha-linolenic acid (ALA). Although there is ample evidence of marine sources, Ayurvedic medicines and plant-based oils also contribute a substantial amount of omega-3. Ayurvedic formulations can improve nutrient absorption and therapeutic efficacy by including these natural sources. Combining omega-3 fatty acids with Ayurvedic herbs promotes cardiovascular health, inflammation reduction, and cognitive function, providing a comprehensive approach to wellness. People can attain optimal wellness by combining traditional knowledge with contemporary nutrition by using natural plant-based sources of omega-3 in conjunction with Ayurvedic formulations.

Conclusion-

Numerous studies have demonstrated the importance of omega-3 fatty acids for human health, including their effects on inflammation, cardiovascular disease, and cognitive function. Although dietary intake is still the best source, supplementation helps those who don't get enough of it. Research on their potential as a treatment for a range of chronic illnesses is still ongoing. To maximize the benefits of omega-3 depending on metabolic and genetic characteristics, future research should concentrate on tailored nutrition strategies. The combination of Ayurvedic herbs and omega-3 fatty acids produces a potent synergy that promotes overall wellness. One can attain better cognitive performance, less inflammation, increased immunity, and general well-being by incorporating these components into their everyday diet. This combination provides a natural and efficient way to achieve optimal health, whether through diet or supplements. Essential polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs), omega-3 fatty acids are well-known for their many health advantages, which include neuroprotective, cardioprotective, and anti-inflammatory properties. Although omega-3s are most frequently linked to fish oils, some therapeutic plants also have substantial levels of them, usually in the form of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA).

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