

Making the right choices



JESSICA LIM
Fish oil supplements line the shelves at the Unity NTUC Healthcare outlet in Great World City. The range available reflects the jump in consumer interest.

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most of their omega-3 fatty acids from eating fish rather than from pills.

"Only for those with high triglyceride levels, adding a fish oil supplement may be beneficial in reducing the levels," she said.

Triglycerides are the chemical form in which fat exists in the body. High levels increase risk of hypertension, diabetes and heart disease. This is because a single fish oil capsule contains about 30 times the amount of omega-3 fatty acids as a single fish portion. On average, a 113.5g serving of oily fish contains about 1.5g of omega-3 fatty acids.

One advantage of supplements is that unlike fish, fish oil can be purified.

Most regulators stipulate a level of purity but standards vary considerably.

The European Union standards are among the strictest, being more cautious than those imposed by the US FDA.

Environmental Defense, a US non-profit organisation, has conducted an international study of fish and fish

oil supplements. The group helps consumers decide how to obtain adequate amounts of omega-3 fatty acids without the accompanying contaminants.

Only three of the fish oil supplement brands available in Singapore are featured on the list of "Best Choice" supplements.

These brands are Nordic Naturals, which is made in Norway, and Shaklee and Usana brands, which are made in the US.

All three brands certify that their supplements are free from heavy metals, dioxins, and PCBs. While other supplements on the market may also be of a good quality, they do not offer this assurance of purity.

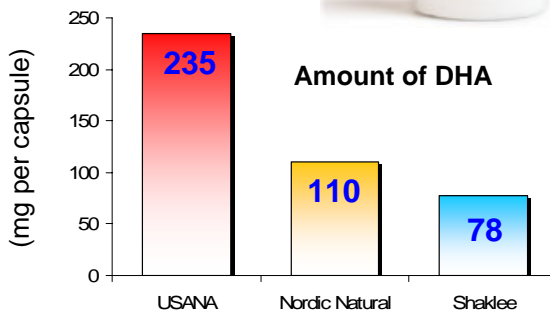
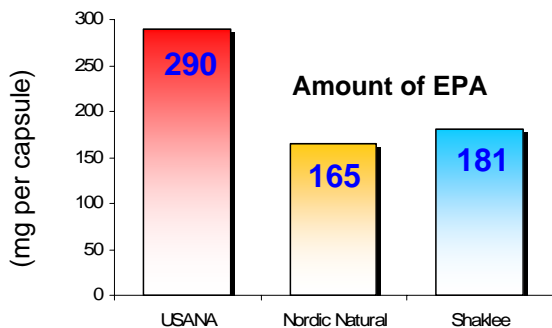
While there is one new benefit after the other of consuming fish oil, getting a safe and reliable supply of the fat is a challenge. Future plans include using genetic engineering techniques to create enough supply of these fatty acids, without relying on marine sources.

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Pooja Vig writes on nutritional matters for Mind Your Body.

And The Most Outstanding Value for Money is ... USANA's BiOmega-3

because it comes with a high content of EPA and DHA, It can offer you great value for money too. Here is what you get in each 1000mg capsule of fish oil:



Adjusted for the difference in EPA and DHA concentrations, and the difference in the number of capsules per bottle, USANA is a good 52% less expensive!

USANA	Nordic Naturals	Shaklee
56 capsules/bottle	60 capsules/bottle	90 capsules/bottle
\$ 46.00	\$ 39.90	\$ 56.65
\$ 46.00	\$ 71.09¹	\$ 71.37¹

¹ These would be Nordic's and Shaklee prices for an equivalent bottle of 56 capsules – if prices are based on the equivalent amounts of EPA and DHA.