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Intelligence

# Diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids linked to eye and brain health, studies suggest

27 August 2025

By Responsible Seafood Advocate

## Latest research indicates omega-3 fatty acids may cut risk of short-sightedness in children and help protect women against Alzheimer's disease

Recent studies suggest that diets rich in omega-3 fatty acids may offer protection against two very different health risks: short-sightedness in children and Alzheimer's disease in women. The findings add to growing evidence that these nutrients, found largely in fish, could play a role in supporting both eye and brain health.

In the first study, published in the *British Journal of Ophthalmology* (<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bjo-2024-326872>), researchers examined the diets and eye health of more than 1,000 children in Hong Kong. They found that higher intake of omega-3 fatty acids was linked to a lower risk of developing myopia, or short-sightedness, while higher intake of saturated fats was associated with an increased risk. Around one in four children in the study already had myopia, a condition projected to affect half of the global population by 2050.

A separate study, published in *Alzheimer's & Dementia* (<https://alz-journals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15525279>), looked at blood samples from more than 800 participants and found that women with Alzheimer's disease had significantly lower levels of



Recent studies suggest that diets rich in omega-3 fatty acids may offer protection against two very different health risks: short-sightedness in children and Alzheimer’s disease in women. Photo by [Anastasia Yudin \(https://www.pexels.com/photo/raw-pieces-of-salmon-with-salt-and-lemon-wedges-on-a-baking-tray-5014596/\)](https://www.pexels.com/photo/raw-pieces-of-salmon-with-salt-and-lemon-wedges-on-a-baking-tray-5014596/).

unsaturated fats, including omega-3s, compared with healthy women. The same pattern was not seen in men, suggesting that these fats may play a sex-specific role in brain health and could help explain why women are disproportionately affected by Alzheimer’s.

“Our study suggests that women should make sure they are getting omega fatty acids in their diet – through fatty fish or via supplements,” said Dr. Cristina Legido-Quigley, senior author from King’s College London. “However, we need clinical trials to determine if shifting the lipid composition can influence the biological trajectory of Alzheimer’s Disease.”

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Taken together, the findings underscore growing scientific interest in the role of diet in long-term health. Myopia rates are climbing rapidly worldwide, especially in East Asia, while Alzheimer's disproportionately affects women, and both conditions carry significant public health costs.

Researchers say the new evidence strengthens the case for investigating omega-3s not just for cardiovascular health, where their benefits are well established, but also for eye and brain function across the lifespan. The studies could also bolster interest in seafood, the main dietary source of omega-3s, highlighting its potential role in supporting eye and brain health.

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