

The Truth About Omega-3s: Where Many Doctors Get It Wrong

By Robert Ferguson

You may have heard that fish oil, an omega-3 supplement, is good for you. Or maybe you've heard they are "dangerous," "useless," or that everyone else is wrong.

If that sounds confusing, you are not alone.

Recently, one of my clients sent me a video of Dr. Daniel Pompa, a chiropractor, author, and popular voice in the functional medicine and ketogenic health space. In the video, he says omega-3s are too fragile to help you and may even increase your risk of disease.

His confidence can sound convincing.

But confidence is not the same as being correct.

In this article, I will show you where that thinking goes right, where it goes wrong, and most importantly:

👉 How to know what is actually working in your body.

Because there's something most people have never been told:

👉 You can test at home to see if omega-3s are working.

No guessing.

No hoping.

Just proof.

What Many Doctors Get Right

Omega-3 fats are made up of many double bonds.

Two important omega-3s are:

- Eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA)
- Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)

These double bonds make omega-3s more sensitive to oxygen. This is called oxidation.

So yes, omega-3s are more fragile.

That part is true [1].

Where Many Doctors Get It Wrong

They stop at chemistry.

But your body is not a test tube.

Just because something is fragile does not mean it is harmful.

That same structure is what makes omega-3s essential for life.

The Fragility Is the Power

Those double bonds allow omega-3s to:

- Improve cell membrane flexibility
- Support nutrient flow
- Improve oxygen delivery
- Support energy production

They also help control inflammation by providing omega-3s.

What Are Specialized Pro-Resolving Mediators (SPMs)?

SPMs are natural compounds made from omega-3s.

They include:

- Resolvins
- Protectins
- Maresins

They help:

- Stop inflammation
- Repair damage
- Restore balance

They turn inflammation OFF when it is no longer needed [1].

Without enough omega-3s, inflammation may stay active.

Dr. Pompa's Claim vs What the Science Shows

Let's break this down clearly.

Claim: Omega-3s are too fragile to work

👉 Reality: Yes, omega-3s are more sensitive because they have multiple double bonds. But that "fragility" is exactly what allows them to work in the body.

Those double bonds allow omega-3s to:

- Improve cell membrane flexibility
- Help nutrients enter cells and waste leave
- Support oxygen delivery and energy production
- Act as signaling molecules

If omega-3s were more stable, they would lose these functions.

👉 That structure is the reason they are essential [1].

Claim: Omega-3s may increase disease risk

👉 Reality: When omega-3 levels are actually measured, the opposite is seen.

Higher omega-3 levels are linked to:

- Lower heart disease risk
- Lower inflammation
- Longer life

This is measured using the Omega-3 Index [4].

Claim: Fish oil doesn't work

👉 Reality: Many studies fail to measure whether omega-3 levels actually increased.

If the product:

- Was oxidized
- Poor quality
- Poorly absorbed

Then nothing changes in the body.

So, the study concludes “it doesn’t work”

👉 When in reality, it never worked biologically [3]

The Missing Piece

Most claims focus on theory.

But ignore measurable biology.

👉 The real question is:

Did it work in your body?

Real Experts Say Something Different

The idea that omega-3s are harmful does not align with decades of scientific evidence.

These are not influencers. These are experts who have spent their careers studying nutrition, inflammation, brain health, and chronic disease.

Artemis Simopoulos is widely recognized as a pioneer in omega-3 research. Her work helped establish the role of the omega-6-to-omega-3 fatty acid balance in inflammation and chronic disease risk [8].

Andrew Weil is a Harvard-trained physician and leader in integrative medicine who has consistently supported omega-3 intake as part of an anti-inflammatory lifestyle.

Rhonda Patrick studies aging, brain health, and nutrition. She has helped explain the critical role of omega-3s, especially DHA, in brain function and long-term health.

Joseph Hibbeln conducted extensive research at the National Institutes of Health on omega-3s and their role in mood, behavior, and neurological health [5].

Philip C. Calder is one of the most published scientists on omega-3s and inflammation, helping define how omega-3s support immune function and resolve inflammation [1].

Dariush Mozaffarian is a cardiologist and leading nutrition scientist whose research links omega-3 intake with improved cardiovascular outcomes [2].

William S. Harris helped develop the Omega-3 Index, a widely used biomarker for assessing omega-3 status and long-term health risk [4].

👉 This is decades of science, not opinion.

What the Research Actually Shows

Some critics point to the Cochrane Collaboration, one of the most respected organizations in evidence-based medicine. Their reviews are known for analyzing large numbers of clinical trials and summarizing the findings.

That credibility matters.

However, it's just as important to understand **what these reviews can and cannot tell us**, especially when it comes to omega-3s.

Many of the studies included in these reviews share important limitations:

- They **do not measure omega-3 levels in the body before and after supplementation**
- They often use **different types, doses, and qualities of omega-3 supplements**
- They do not confirm whether a **biological change actually occurred in participants**

This creates a key issue.

If a study gives someone omega-3s but never checks whether their omega-3 levels increased, then we don't actually know if the intervention worked.

That's like:

- 👉 Giving someone a medication
- 👉 And never checking if it entered the bloodstream

If the omega-3 supplement was:

- Oxidized
- Poor quality
- Poorly absorbed

Then the person's biology may not change at all.

- 👉 So the study concludes "omega-3s don't work"
- 👉 When the real issue is the omega-3 never worked in the body

This is why test-based approaches matter.

- 👉 Without measuring change, conclusions are limited [3]

The Data Doesn't Lie

- Higher omega-3 levels = longer life [4]
- Most people have low levels
- Low levels link to inflammation [1][6]

The Real Problem: Most Fish Oils Don't Work

Many fail due to:

- Oxidation
- Poor quality
- Poor absorption
- No testing

What Most Doctors Are Missing

Omega-3s need protection.

Polyphenols help:

- Protect omega-3s from oxidation
- Improve stability
- Improve function

Research supports this [10].

Where Testing Changes Everything

When you test:

- 👉 You remove guesswork
- 👉 You see real results

The Biggest Mistake

- Wrong product
- Too little
- No testing

A Real Story: From Guessing to Knowing

One client came to me frustrated.

She had been taking omega-3 supplements for months but didn't feel any different. She assumed they were working, because that's what she had been told.

We tested her.

Her Omega-3 Index came back low.

That told us something important.

What she was taking was not working in her body.

We made one simple change.

Four months later, we tested again.

Her levels improved significantly.

But more importantly:

- Her energy improved
- Her joint discomfort improved
- She felt the difference

For the first time, she wasn't guessing.

She knew.

Another Story: Relief Where It Matters Most

Another client came in with a different issue.

She had been dealing with dry eyes for years and relied on eye drops daily.

We tested her.

Her omega-3 levels were low.

We improved her intake.

Within weeks:

- Her eyes felt better
- She reduced her reliance on drops
- Eventually, she no longer needed them

She didn't need more products.

She needed the right nutrients, confirmed by testing.

The Bigger Issue: Most People Have Insufficient Omega-3 Levels

Most people are not clinically deficient.

But their levels are too low for optimal health.

- Average: 3–4%
- Optimal: 8–12% [4]

Where Everything Changes: Testing

Vitas Analytics measures real levels in your body.

Why Vitas Matters

Vitas Analytics is not just another lab. It is a scientifically validated, third-party laboratory with deep roots in academic and clinical research.

Vitas originated from research at the University of Oslo and has become a global leader in advanced blood analysis, especially in measuring fatty acids in whole blood and red blood cell membranes.

What makes Vitas different is this:

- 👉 They do not rely on estimates or assumptions
- 👉 They measure what is actually happening inside your body

Their testing methods are used in large-scale clinical research and trusted by scientists around the world.

Data generated using Vitas has been published in respected journals, including:

- The British Medical Journal
- Nature Communications
- The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology

Vitas also supports testing across multiple biomarkers, including:

- Omega-3 Index
- Vitamin D
- Hemoglobin A1c

Leading institutions such as:

- Harvard University
- Tufts University
- Mayo Clinic
- Cleveland Clinic

use advanced testing like this in research and clinical practice.

Why This Changes Everything

At this point, the conversation is no longer about opinions.

👉 It becomes about measurable biology.

The question becomes:

👉 Did your omega-3 levels improve?

This Is Where the Rubber Meets the Road

👉 Did your omega-3 levels improve?

Testing gives you the answer.

No guessing.

No opinions.

Just results.

The Bottom Line

Omega-3s are fragile.

But that is why they work.

They are essential for:

- Cells
- Brain
- Heart
- Inflammation

Final Thought

You don't have to believe me.

And you don't have to believe Dr. Pompa.

👉 Test your body and see the truth for yourself.

Email me, and I'll send you a link to a short online presentation that explains the at-home test, along with my recommendation for what I believe is the most effective omega-3 supplement, one that combines omega-3s with polyphenols for better results.

✉ robert@dietfreelife.com

Or simply reach out to the person who shared this article with you.

Because once you test...

You stop guessing.

And you start knowing.

References

1. Calder, P. C. (2020). Omega-3 fatty acids and inflammatory processes. *Biochemical Society Transactions*, 48(3), 887–899.
2. Mozaffarian, D., & Wu, J. H. Y. (2011). Omega-3 fatty acids and cardiovascular disease. *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, 58(20), 2047–2067.
3. Abdelhamid, A. S., et al. (2020). Omega-3 fatty acids for cardiovascular disease. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, CD003177.

4. Harris, W. S., et al. (2021). Omega-3 levels and mortality. *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, 96(9), 2309–2321.
5. Hibbeln, J. R., et al. (2006). Omega-3 fatty acids and health. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 83(6), 1483S–1493S.
6. Lands, W. E. M. (2014). Omega-3 and omega-6 balance. *Progress in Lipid Research*, 55, 17–29.
7. Leaf, A., & Kang, J. X. (1996). Omega-3 and heart rhythm. *Journal of Cardiovascular Electrophysiology*, 7(5), 439–448.
8. Simopoulos, A. P. (2016). Omega ratio and disease risk. *Nutrients*, 8(3), 128.
9. Vitas Analytics. Laboratory overview.
10. Scalbert, A., Johnson, I. T., & Saltmarsh, M. (2005). Polyphenols and health. *Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition*, 45(4), 287–306.

About the Author

Robert Ferguson is a California- and Florida-based single father of two daughters, clinical nutritionist, Omega Balancing Coach™, researcher, best-selling author, speaker, podcast and television host, health advisor, NAACP Image Award Nominee, creator of the Diet Free Life methodology, and Chief Nutrition Officer for iCoura Health. He also serves on the Presidential Task Force on Obesity for the National Medical Association and the Health and Product Advisory Board for Zinzino, Inc.