

Abstract

Nutr Rev. 2008 Jun;66(6):326-32.

Update on alpha-linolenic acid.

Stark AH, Crawford MA, Reifen R.

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Faculty of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Quality Sciences, Institute of Biochemistry, Food Science and Nutrition, School of Nutritional Sciences, Rehovot, Israel.

BACKGROUND: Consumption of omega 3 fatty acids is known to have health benefits. For many years, the importance of the only member of the omega 3 family considered to be essential, alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), has been overlooked.

DISCUSSION: Current research indicates that ALA, along with its longer chain metabolites, may play an important role in many physiological functions. Potential benefits of ALA include cardioprotective effects, modulation of the inflammatory response, and a positive impact on both central nervous system function and behavior.

CONCLUSION: Recommended levels for ALA intake have been set, yet the possible advantages of its consumption are just being revealed.

PMID: 18522621

