
EpLink is the epilepsy research program funded by the Ontario Brain Institute.

What do we do? EpLink currently conducts 40 research projects across the province related to: Epidemiology and Diagnosis, Drug Therapy, Diet Therapy, Seizure Surgery, Seizure Prediction and Stimulation, Genetics and Epigenetics, and Cognition, Mood and Quality of Life.

Why do we do it? About 1 in 100 people have epilepsy. About 1 in 300 have uncontrolled epilepsy. People with uncontrolled seizures have a diminished quality of life. The hope is that the EpLink program research will lead to seizure freedom for individuals with intractable epilepsy, improving their overall quality of life.

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Double Blind Placebo Controlled Trial of the Anticonvulsant Effects of n-3 Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids in People with Epilepsy

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Omega-3 Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids *for patients with* **Epilepsy**

UHN REB: 14-7560

*Can a diet rich in
polyunsaturated fatty acids
reduce seizure frequency
and severity in patients
with intractable epilepsy?*

*Information for
Patients*



What are Omega-3 Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids?

Omega-3 Polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) are healthy fatty acids that come from foods like fish, and have been found to have beneficial effects for people with epilepsy, cardiovascular disease, bipolar disorder and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Can PUFAs help my seizures?

A recent study found that children with epilepsy had fewer and less severe seizures after taking omega-3 PUFAs.

There is reason to believe that omega-3 PUFAs may also reduce the frequency and severity of seizures in adults with epilepsy, when used in combination with anti-epileptic drugs.

If this proves to be true, then taking omega-3 diet supplements may improve seizure control cheaply and without side effects.

What does this study involve?

If you choose to participate in this study, you will need to attend two in-person visits with the study doctor. The rest of the study will be completed over the phone with the study coordinator.

During the first visit, the study physician will review your medical history, including your seizure frequency and type, as well as your medications.

Blood will be drawn to measure the levels of anti-epileptic drugs and PUFAs in your system.

There will then be a 6-month treatment period during which you will take either PUFAs or another natural health supplement three times per day. You will be asked to keep track of your seizure frequency and severity for the duration of the study.

Who can join this study?

You may be eligible to participate if you:

- Have been diagnosed with epilepsy
- Are over the age of 18 years
- Have one or more seizures per month despite anticonvulsant therapy
- Are not currently taking anticoagulant, hypotension or anti-hypertensive medication
- Do not have an allergy or sensitivity to fish, fish oil, coconut oil, olive oil, hemp oil, safflower oil, flax seed oil, or soybean oil
- Are not currently pregnant, breastfeeding or planning to become pregnant and use a method of birth control (female participants)

Are there side effects?

In the trial most similar to this one, no side effects were reported. In other trials, side effects such as nausea and diarrhea have been reported and described as “infrequent and mild”.

Why should you participate?

You may have improved seizure control and you will help contribute to a growing body of research that aims to help people with epilepsy.

How can I get involved?

Interested participants should contact the study coordinator:

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