

“The Omega-3 Connection”



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Synopsis:

Working in the field of psychiatric neuroscience at Harvard Medical School and McLean Hospital in Belmont, Massachusetts, Dr. Stoll has set in motion what many people believe to be the next “rage” in nutrition and health care: the value of omega-3 fatty acids in the role of human health and well-being. From increasing newborn health to treating depression and ADHD to preventing heart disease, omega-3 fatty acids hold a pivotal role in human health.

Strengths:

1. Dr. Stoll makes a more-than-convincing argument concerning our evolutionary roots in South Africa, citing our brain’s tripling in size and higher reasoning abilities to be owed to our increased consumption of omega-3 fatty acids. The lack of omega-3 fatty acids have led, in Dr. Stoll’s words, North American diet to be “devolutionary” (p. 58) rather than evolutionary.
2. Being in the field of research, Dr. Stoll’s statements are backed up by tremendous amounts of research, leading to his credibility.
3. Dr. Stoll gives a broad view of nutrition’s vital role in human health, asking “Could the Paleolithic diet be the true nutritional gold standard we should be following today?” (p. 49) rather than citing omega-3 fatty acids as the true panacea to human health. Rather, omega-3 fatty acids are but one cog in the wheel of optimal nutrition.
4. Dr. Stoll speaks at length on the importance of omega-3 fatty acids in the role of pregnancy, its effect on fetal brain development and postpartum depression.

Weaknesses:

1. Dr. Stoll cites coconut oil as contributing to coronary artery disease (p. 34), but coconut oil has been very prominent lately in nutritional circles as contributing mightily to overall health as an anti-obesity, anti-bacterial, anti-viral, brain-improving oil.¹

Overall Impression:

This book makes remarkable sense both in its common sense justification for omega-3 fatty acids’ value in our overall health and the medical profession’s shocking ignorance toward this topic. If there was one supplement I recommend you take, it would be omega-3 fatty acids, particularly fish oil, simply because it is so lacking in the North American Diet.

Reference:

1. Fife, B. (2003). The Healing Miracle of Coconut Oil, Piccadilly Books.