

The Omega-3 Connection

A must-read for anyone dealing with depression

The Omega-3 Connection by Andrew L. Stoll, M.D., strikes yet another blow against the Standard American Diet (SAD). We already know that years of noshing on highly processed foods have saddled us with sky-high rates of heart disease, obesity, and related conditions. But, as we're starting to understand now, our eating habits may also be subtly altering our brain chemistry, leaving us vulnerable to anxiety disorders and depression. Only in this case, it's not just what we're eating—it's what we're not eating – such as, foods containing Omega-3 Essential Fatty Acids—the "good fats" that help maintain optimal brain function.

In his book, Stoll, the director of the psychopharmacology research lab at Boston's McLean Hospital and assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, suggests that restoring our body's natural balance of Omega-3 may help alleviate (and prevent) many types of depression—even for those who don't respond to traditional antidepressants. Omega-3 may also prove helpful with other problems, such as the inability to handle stress, memory loss, and cognitive decline. The book contains a "renewal plan" designed to help readers put Stoll's concepts into practice, recipes for Omega-3-rich dishes, advice for choosing supplements, and dosages for therapeutic use.

Although Stoll is quick with the caveat that much of the research on Omega-3 and brain function is still evolving, he makes a compelling case for using these fats to regulate depression and other cognitive disorders. Along with major epidemiological evidence that shows lower rates of depression in those cultures that consume a great deal of Omega-3, Stoll's own studies indicate that boosting their intake can reduce depression symptoms. And Stoll cites stacks of additional studies suggesting that Omega-3 can also help with major depression, schizophrenia, and postpartum depression. Going even further, Stoll makes a strong argument that Omega-3 deficiency could be contributing to rising rates of teen violence and attention deficit disorders.

Of course, depression should never be treated without physician supervision. But in laying the groundwork for Omega-3 to emerge as the next big thing in natural depression therapy, Stoll certainly gives us food for thought. --
Norine Dworkin

Review

Lauren Marangell, M.D. Director of Psychopharmacology, Baylor College of Medicine Dr. Stoll, well known for his tremendous empathy and creativity, provides a clear synthesis of an important and novel concept. He translates information from a wide array of scientific disciplines into a highly readable and provocative book, with implications for many of the diseases of Western society.

Book Description

For years scientists have searched for a "magic bullet" to relieve the pain of depression and other mood disorders – safe enough for nursing mothers, children with ADHD, and the elderly, without the side effects associated with medicines like Prozac, Zoloft, and lithium. Now the search may finally be over, thanks to the Omega-3 Renewal Plan, introduced here by Andrew L. Stoll, M.D., Director of the Psycho-pharmacology Research Laboratory at Harvard's McLean Hospital.

In his groundbreaking research, Stoll found that Omega-3 fatty acids, already known for their importance in preventing heart disease, Crohn's disease, rheumatoid arthritis, and cancer, play a crucial role in mental health – regulating and enhancing mood, sharpening memory, and even aiding concentration and learning. And these remarkable substances, so essential to our health, are found abundantly in common fish oils and other sources.

The bad news is that even though Omega-3 fatty acids have played a critical role in our evolutionary past, these extraordinary substances are being depleted by our Western diet and lifestyle, and the resulting nutritional imbalance seems to have led to a sharp rise in heart disease and depression. By contrast, in Japan and other countries where fish consumption is high, both heart disease and depression rates are low. Stoll explains how easily Omega-3 can be used up in just a few generations, and how a new mother with depleted Omega-3 loses even more of this nutrient to her baby – a fact that may account for the severe postpartum depression so many women suffer. He documents evidence that a shortage of Omega-3 may play a role in attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and other learning problems. The good news is that this downward spiral of depletion and depression can finally be reversed.

In his revolutionary **Omega-3 Renewal Plan**, Dr. Stoll presents readers for the first time with all the tools for restoring their natural balance of Omega-3 Essential Fatty Acids, including which foods to eat and how to choose the most effective over-the-counter supplements. Featuring information on how to integrate flaxseed and fish oils into diet and medication plans, and including simple recipes as well as supplement dosages and sources, *The Omega-3 Connection* offers an entirely new, practical method for improving mental health.

Download Description

Ground-breaking research provides an exciting new approach to treating the most common mental problem in America – depression. For years, scientists have searched for a "magic bullet" to relieve the pain and trauma of mood disorders – one safe enough for nursing mothers, children with ADD, and the elderly, and one uncomplicated by the toxicity and invasive side effects associated with mood regulators like Prozac, Zoloft, and lithium. Thanks to Harvard's Andrew Stoll, the search may finally be over. Stoll found that Omega-3 Essential Fatty Acids, already known for their importance in preventing heart disease and cancer, play a crucial role in mental health – regulating and enhancing mood, sharpening memory, and even aiding concentration and learning. This substance, so essential to our health, is found abundantly in fish and flax oils and occurs naturally in humans, but is often depleted by our Western diet and lifestyle. In his revolutionary program, Stoll presents readers with all the tools for restoring their natural balance of Omega-3 – including the foods to eat and how to choose the most effective over-the-counter supplements. Featuring information on how to integrate flaxseed and fish oil into diet and medication plans, simple recipes, supplement doses and sources, *The Omega-3 Connection* offers an entirely new, practical method for improving mental health.

About the Author

Andrew L. Stoll, M.D., is Director of the Psychopharmacology Research Laboratory at McLean Hospital in Boston and an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, as well as the recipient of the 1999 Klerman Award from the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression for the studies described in this book. He is the author of dozens of academic papers. This is his first book for the general public.