

# Fishers of Health: The Biblical Benefits of DHA

Andrii Zvorygin yN-PH2196 mtH2a1 & GPT4  
attender of Glad Tidings Fellowship, Tara, ON  
anabaptist.ca andrii@liberit.ca

July 20, 2024



## Fishers of Health: The Biblical Benefits of DHA

### Introduction:

*Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul. - 3 John 1:2*

In our journey of faith, we seek to nourish not only our spirits but also our bodies, which are the temples of the Holy Spirit. Just as Jesus, symbolized by the fish, brought spiritual nourishment, certain fish like salmon bring physical nourishment, particularly for our brains.

### Biblical Symbolism:

Jesus called His disciples to be "fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19), and the fish has long been a symbol of Christianity. In the early church, the fish symbol, or Ichthys, was a secret sign among believers.

**Ichthys (Fish Symbol):** ΙΧΘΥΣ (Ichthys) is an acronym in Greek for "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior."

**Miracle of the Fish:** Jesus fed the 5,000 with five loaves and two fish (John 6:1-14),

symbolizing His ability to provide and nourish.

### DHA and Brain Health:

DHA (Docosahexaenoic Acid) is an omega-3 fatty acid crucial for brain health. It's abundant in fatty fish like salmon, mackerel, and sardines. DHA supports brain function, improves memory, and reduces the risk of cognitive decline. Research shows that reaction times are directly correlated with intelligence, so having enough DHA in one's diet can help improve overall cognitive abilities.

**Fish High in DHA:** Salmon, Mackerel, Sardines, Shrimp, Crayfish.

### Fish Oil Supplements:

Nowadays, many people turn to flavoured high DHA fish oil as a convenient and cost-effective way to get their DHA. This can be a more affordable option than eating fish every day, ensuring you and your kids still receive the benefits of this vital nutrient. Kids love the dessert flavours like lemon cake, a daily reminder of Jesus as the bread of life (John 6:51).

### Importance for Mothers and Babies:

Ensuring adequate DHA intake is particularly important for mothers in their third trimester and those breastfeeding. During these times, DHA is essential for the developing baby's brain. Without enough DHA in the mother's diet, her brain can "cannibalize" its own DHA to provide for the baby, potentially impacting both mother and child.

#### Benefits for Baby:

- Supports healthy brain development.
- Ensures the baby has enough DHA for optimal growth.

#### Benefits for Mother:

- Protects the mother's brain health during pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- Helps maintain cognitive function and emotional well-being.
- Helps prevent "mommy brain" (a term used to describe the cognitive changes some mothers experience during and after pregnancy).

#### Myelin Sheaths and Brain Function:

DHA is a critical component of myelin sheaths, the protective coverings around nerve fibers. These sheaths help improve the speed and accuracy of signal transmission in the brain, reducing crossfiring and ensuring smooth communication between neurons.

## **Benefits of Healthy Myelin Sheaths:**

- Enhance cognitive function and reaction times.
- Help individuals stay focused and think more quickly.

Consider the example of cats, known for their lightning-fast reflexes. Their exceptional reaction times are due in part to their extra thick myelin sheaths, which are maintained by their diet rich in fish.

## **Other Essential Brain Nutrients:**

### **1. Choline:**

- Found in eggs, liver, and sunflower seeds.
- Essential for memory and brain development.
- One of the best sources is sunflower lecithin, which is also good for cell walls.
- Helps in the production of acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter important for learning and memory.

### **Using Sunflower Lecithin:**

- **Emulsifier:** Sunflower lecithin can be used as an emulsifier in recipes, helping to blend ingredients that don't normally mix well, such as oil and water.
- **Quantities:** Typically, use about 1 teaspoon of sunflower lecithin powder per cup of liquid in recipes like smoothies, salad dressings, and sauces. For baking, use 1-2 teaspoons per recipe.
- **Tips:** It can also be added to homemade nut butters, energy bars, and vegan cheeses to improve texture and consistency.

### **2. Vitamin D:**

- Found in fatty fish, cheese, and egg yolks.
- Supports brain function and mood regulation.
- With our indoor lifestyles, it can be important to supplement, especially for babies who are still growing. Encourages proper bone formation and helps avoid rickets.

### **3. Iodine:**

- Essential for thyroid function and body temperature regulation.
- Deficiency can cause symptoms like feeling cold frequently.

- Found in small quantities in ocean fish, but more easily obtained from kelp powder supplements, especially important in regions like the Great Lakes where seafood consumption might be lower.
- Prevents cretinism and developmental issues in children.
- Iodized salt often doesn't have enough iodine to meet people's needs, and many use other kinds of salt. Having a kelp iodine supplement in the kitchen is essential and can be added to savory dishes that need salt.

### **Using Kelp Iodine Powder:**

- **As a Salt Substitute:** Kelp iodine powder can be used as a substitute for salt in savory dishes. It adds a slightly salty, umami flavor while boosting iodine intake.
- **Quantities:** Use about 1/4 teaspoon of kelp powder per serving in soups, stews, and sauces. Adjust to taste, as kelp powder can have a strong flavor.
- **Tips:** Sprinkle kelp powder on salads, popcorn, or roasted vegetables for an added nutritional boost. It can also be mixed into dressings, dips, and marinades.

### **4. Antioxidants:**

- Found in fruits and vegetables like blueberries, spinach, and nuts.
- Protects the brain from oxidative stress and supports cognitive function.

### **Avoiding Alliums for Better Cognition:**

While alliums like garlic and onions have medicinal and antioxidant properties, they are also known to interfere with cognition, causing "garlic brain" and lowering reaction times. It is preferable to substitute green leafy vegetables like lettuce, kale, dandelion, sunflower greens, or grape leaves, as well as various green herbs, for spice and flavor. Turmeric is a better anti-inflammatory, and elderberries more effective for boosting immune system.

### **Conclusion:**

As we nourish our bodies with these God-given foods, we also nourish our minds and spirits. Let us remember to care for the temple of the Holy Spirit with the same diligence we apply to our spiritual growth.

*And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.* - Philippians 4:19