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Omega-3 fatty acids and obesity

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Omega-3 fatty acids in obesity and metabolic syndrome: A mechanistic update Kembra Albracht-Schulte^{a,b}, Nishan S. Kalupahana^{a,b,d,*} skalupahana@pdn.ac.lk, Latha Ramalingam^{a,b}, Shu Wang^{a,b}, Shaikh Rahman^{a,b}, Jacalyn Robert-McComb^{b,c} and Naima Moustaid-Moussa^{a,b,**} naima.moustaid-moussa@ttu.edu

Abstract

Strategies to reduce obesity have become public health priorities as the prevalence of obesity has risen in the United States and around the world. While the anti-inflammatory and hypo-triglyceridemic properties of long-chain omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (n-3 PUFA) are well known, their anti-obesity effects and efficacy against metabolic syndrome, especially in humans, are still under debate. In animal models, evidence consistently suggests a role for n-3 PUFA in reducing fat mass, particularly in the retroperitoneal and epididymal regions. In humans, however, published research suggests that though n-3 PUFA may not aid weight loss, they may attenuate further weight gain, and could be useful in the diet or as a supplement to help maintain weight loss. Proposed mechanisms by which n-3 PUFA may work to improve body composition and counteract obesity-related metabolic changes include: modulating lipid metabolism; regulating adipokines, such as adiponectin and leptin; alleviating adipose tissue inflammation; promoting adipogenesis; and altering epigenetic mechanisms.

Abbreviations

ALA	α-linolenic acid

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