

# NUTRITION KNOWLEDGE

*Greater Opportunities of the Permian Basin Head Start*

APRIL 2024

Spring time has just approached us which means allergies are in the air. We want to keep our little ones as healthy as possible and by including **Omega 3's** in their diet we can balance their immune system.

## What are Omega 3's?

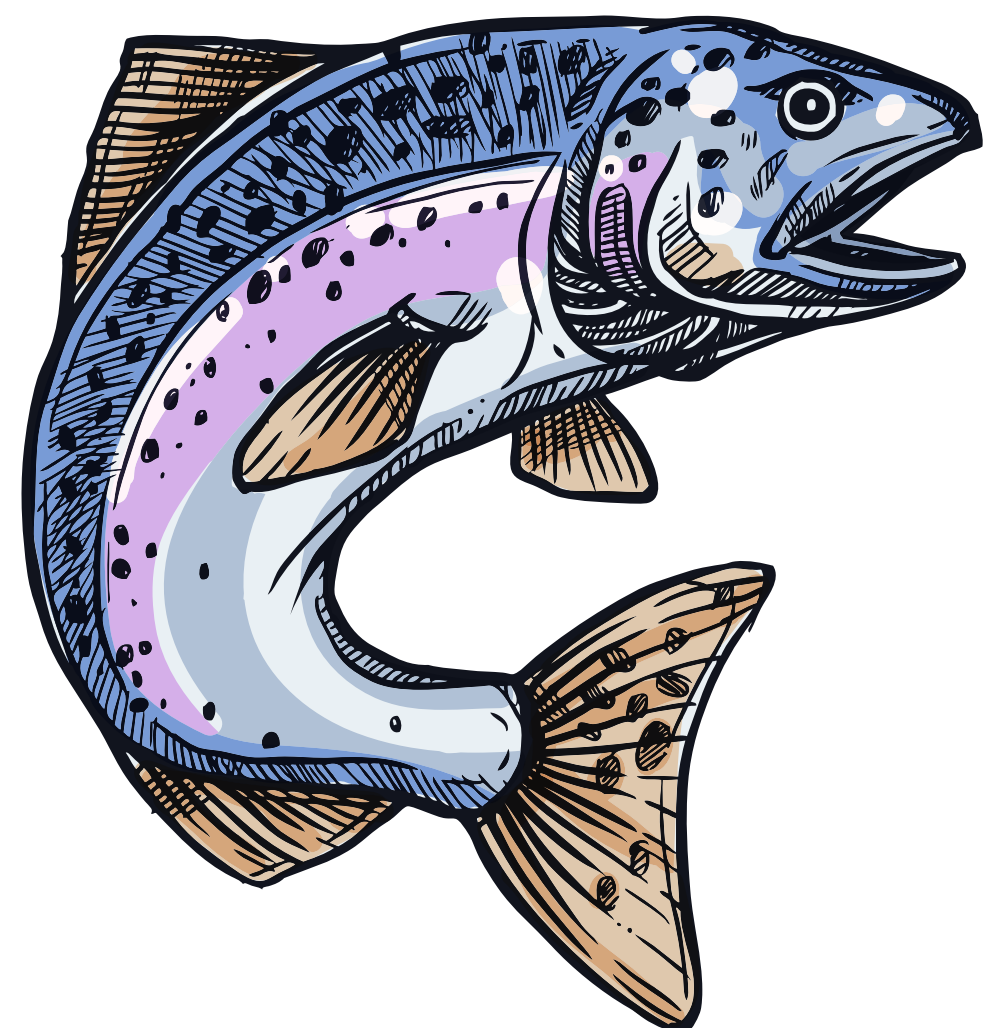
- Omega 3 fatty acids are polyunsaturated fats that play important functions in your little one's body.
- The body does not make omega 3's so they are essential, meaning we get them from the foods that we eat.
- There are 3 main types of Omega 3's:
  - Alpha-linolenic acid (ALA): plant sources
  - Eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA): animal sources
  - Docosahexaenoic acid (DHA): animal sources
- It is recommended to consume most of your Omega 3's from animal marine fish than plant sources because they contain higher amounts of fatty acids and they are more easily absorbed.

## What are the benefits of Omega 3's?

- Omega 3's are linked to lower the risk and prevent the severity of asthma in children.
- They help balance the immune's response by helping reduce allergic reactions.
- Plays a role in children's brain development including the structure and function.
- Additional benefits include eye and skin health, reducing inflammation, and easing attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

## What is the recommended intake for children?

- Breastmilk contains all of the necessary omega 3's needed when breastfeeding.
- For infants Birth-12 months, 0.5 grams per day is recommended. This is equal to about 1 salmon fish nugget.
- For toddlers 1-3 years old, 0.7 grams per day is recommended. This is equal to about 1 flaxseed protein ball.
- According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, omega 3 food sources are recommended over supplements.



# SOURCES OF OMEGA 3'S

## Where are Omega 3's found?

- Naturally found in animal and plant sources

- **Animal Sources:**



**Canned Light Tuna fish**



**Salmon**



**Mackerel**

- **Plant Sources:**



**Flaxseed oil**



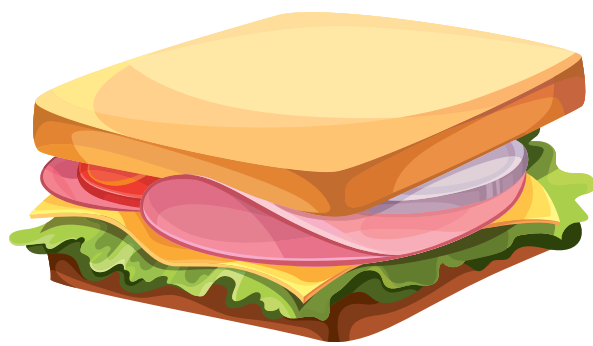
**Chia Seeds**



**Soy Beans**

## How do I prepare Omega 3 foods for my little ones?

- Try serving in kid-friendly ways.
- Offer a variety to see what your child likes best.



### **Sandwich**

Fish can be added to sandwiches by making tuna salad or fish patties.



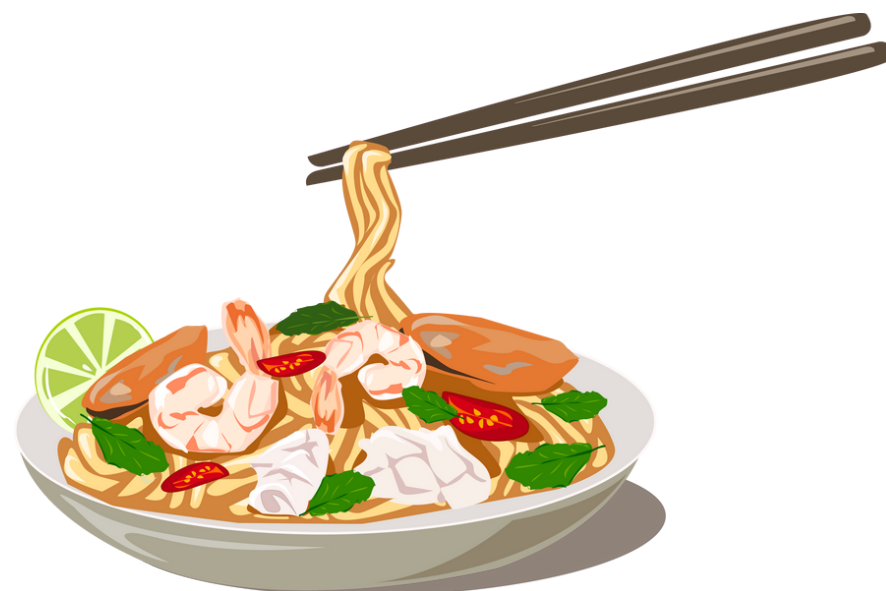
### **Fish Nuggets**

Fish can be served as nuggets or it can be baked in your kiddos choice of sauce.



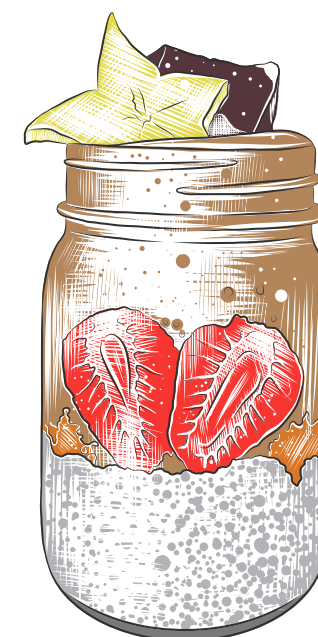
### **Flaxseed muffins**

Flaxseeds can be added in a variety of ways such as muffins, yogurt, protein balls and oatmeal.



### **Main dishes**

Flaxseed oil can be added to your main dishes. It can be used in meats, vegetables, stir fry, soups and salads.



### **Smoothies**

When making your kiddos smoothie, think about adding walnuts, chia seeds or flaxseeds to enhance the nutrients your child is getting.

# **MOVEMENT MATTERS: EXPLORING THE OUTDOORS**

Outdoor Exploration Activities by Action for Healthy Kids

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/outdoor-exploration-activities/>

Spring time is here and the weather is warming up! Spending time outdoors is great for your kiddos body and mind. Not only is your little one getting physical activity but they are also crafting a creative mind. You can start including the outdoors into your day by playing outside or bringing the outside to where you are.

## **How can I explore the outdoors with my little one?**

Here are a few ideas to help you out:

- **Scavenger hunt:** Set up a scavenger hunt outside by hiding an object and getting your kiddo to find it by giving them clues along the way. Another idea is to let your child search for something a certain shape, size or color.
- **Create outdoor art:** Let your kiddo explore the outdoors and find objects that they would like to create art out of. Use these objects to glue on a piece of construction paper and add color!
- **Outdoor picnic:** Pack your favorite picnic snacks and outdoor activities and explore the outdoors by sitting on the ground exploring your surrounding environment. A few outdoor activities you can include are a hoolihoop, jump rope or a ball to toss.
- **Playgrounds:** Playgrounds give kids free range to run around and play on the different equipments. Playgrounds are beneficial as they help teach kids to take turns, interact with other kids and make new friends.
- **Fruit or vegetable picking:** Find a local farm where you can pick your own fruits and vegetables. Kids love this activity because they can pick and eat at the same time.



## **CHIA SEED OVERNIGHT OATS**

**By: Kathryn Jernigan, Dietetic Student**

Chia seeds are a great source of Omega 3's. Over night oats are easy to make, require little time and are ready to serve right out of the fridge in the morning time. This can be made to your little ones liking by adding their favorite flavors and fruits. This will ensure that your kiddos are getting the nutrients that they need all while keeping them satisfied and full!

### **Raspberry Cheesecake Chia Overnight Oats**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1/2 cup old fashioned oats
- 2/3 cup cows milk
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- 1 tablespoon Jell-O sugar free cheesecake instant pudding
- 1/3 cup raspberries
- toppings of your choice

#### **Directions:**

1. Smash 1/3 cup of raspberries in the bottom of the container.
2. Place the oats, chia seeds and the Jell-O sugar free cheesecake in the container.
3. Add in the cows milk.
4. Stir thoroughly to combine all ingredients leaving no chia seeds clumped on the bottom or the sides of the container.
5. Place the lid on the container and let it sit in the fridge overnight.
6. Enjoy and serve the next morning by giving it a stir and adding any toppings you'd like such as extra fruit, granola, yogurt or peanut butter!



**Pro Tip:** Use an air tight container when you are making over night oats. This will allow them to soak properly through the night and stay fresh for longer. Overnight oats can be kept in the fridge up to 3 days!