

Omega-3 Testing in Pregnancy

Giving your baby the **best start to life**



Omega-3 and your pregnancy

What is omega-3?

Omega-3 fats are nutrients commonly found in fish and algae. Having enough omega-3 during pregnancy can help your baby be born at full term.

Why omega-3 matters

Babies do best when they are born full term. Babies born too soon, especially before 34 weeks, often need long stays in hospital. Some have longer term health problems or developmental delays.

Why have an omega-3 test?

- Many women do not get enough omega-3 from diet alone.
- You cannot tell what your level is without a blood test.
- Knowing your omega-3 level helps your midwife or doctor give the right advice for you.
- This includes whether supplements are needed and how much to take.



To find out more, visit:
sahealth.sa.gov.au/pretermbirth



How the omega-3 test works

This simple test measures the amount of omega-3 in your blood. No extra blood sample is needed. The test can use the blood you already provide during your first or second trimester screening. It can also be ordered separately, as long as it is done before 20 weeks of pregnancy.

Your omega-3 test results

**Results are reported as a % of total fatty acids in serum*

BELOW
3.7%

Take high-dose omega-3 supplements until 37 weeks of pregnancy, to reduce the chance of early preterm birth.

- Suggested dose
 - Around 1000mg/day DHA+EPA combined (with at least 600mg DHA) **OR**
 - Around 1000mg/day of DHA alone
- Vegan supplements are available.

A list of suitable supplements is available at sahmri.au/omega3

3.7%
TO
4.3%

No action required.

If you are already taking omega-3 as part of a multivitamin and mineral supplement or as a standalone supplement, this may continue.

ABOVE
4.3%

Do not take high dose omega-3 supplements.

If you are already taking omega-3 as part of a multivitamin and mineral supplement or as a standalone supplement and wish to continue, the dose of DHA+EPA should not exceed 250mg per day.