



**INDUSTRY ADVISORY:**  
**OMEGA-3 IMMUNITY CLAIMS**

Edition: March 24, 2020

**In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and confusion about the role omega-3s may play in immunity-based protection, GOED is issuing an industry advisory on the topic. Using a proprietary clinical study database of all human studies on omega-3s, GOED has completed a literature search on this topic and does not believe the science supports a claim.**

Given the context — COVID-19 — the scientific literature on viral immunity (not general immunity) is what is relevant. GOED ran a search using the following query string: (virus OR viral OR influenza) AND (eicosapentaenoic OR docosahexaenoic OR docosapentaenoic OR omega-3 OR “fish oil” OR “cod liver oil” OR “krill oil” OR “n-3PUFA” OR “n-3 PUFA”), which returned [22 interventional studies](#), mostly positive, and [one relevant neutral systematic review](#). The issue is that the majority of the studies were conducted in diseased populations so it would be difficult to argue that this population would have the same immune response as an otherwise healthy individual. GOED did another search related to general immunity and, based on a quick review of the article titles (both [meta-analyses](#) and [interventional trials](#)), it appears the majority of the studies were conducted in diseased populations, again making it difficult to draw any reasonable conclusions in a healthy population. Based on this research, GOED concludes that there is an insufficient body of scientific literature to connect EPA/DHA to benefits of either positive general or viral immunity outcomes in a healthy population.

Additionally, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Federal Trade Commission (FTC) are closely watching for misleading product claims around COVID-19 prevention or treatment and GOED believes even a general “immunity” claim on a product could be considered an implied claim about COVID-19 given the current environment.