

Why do I need to buy SPECIAL fish oil?

Answers from a nationally broadcasted fitness expert... reprint provided by USW

Kim asks: If I can only afford cheap fish oil, should I take that or just not take fish oil?

Ben answers: Okay, good question. So I talked a little bit about regular supplements versus expensive supplements or what type of fillers is going to cheap supplements and in the case of fish oil, there's some issues, so when you extract EPA and DHA, which are those two Omega 3 fatty acids that you get from fish oil, it involves or can typically involve, especially when you're getting the less expensive forms of fish oil, the use of hexane, which is a petrochemical solvent that they use to extract and purify the oil and that can make the EPA and the DHA very prone to oxidizing, and that's another reason that they'll throw antioxidants in there along with it like that astaxanthin I mentioned earlier but a lot of lower quality fish oils, when they use an antioxidant, they use something called alpha-tocopherol which is really not that great of an antioxidant. Better antioxidants you should be looking for would be like that astaxanthin I mentioned, another good one would be like a rosemary extract, the gamma tocopherol is a good one but the type of antioxidant used in the fish oil and the amount of exposure to hexane that occurs in the formation of fish oil is something that is going to be affected by the actual price of the fish oil, and you could be getting free radicals, rancid fish oil, sub-par oils, when you're consuming a fish oil that would be considered just like a cheaper off-the-shelf version and although fish oil manufacturers, a lot of times they'll say that their products are chemical free, it's unfortunately not always the case. They did that study that tested like 15% of consumer fish oils and found that all of them were contaminated with PCBs. So you want to look for fish oil that's been certified free of toxins by independent testers and then the other thing comes down to the actual type of fats that you're going to get in that fish oil. So fish oil supplements that have the natural triglyceride form of fish oil are going to be way more advantageous than the ethyl ester form in terms of the amount of absorption and utilization in your body, but the ethyl ester form, because it's a lot cheaper to make, is what's used in most of the less expensive fish oils and there really hasn't even been done a bunch of research on the potential toxicity of the ethyl ester form of the fish oils. So, what this comes down to is that, to answer your question, I would not take a fish oil unless you're taking a good brand. Just don't go out and buy any fish oil off the shelf because what you're getting may do you more harm than good.