

11 DIETARY  
**8**  
PRINCIPLES

**Consume animal foods  
from land and sea to balance  
omega-6 and omega-3.**



Traditional diets contain nearly equal amounts of omega-6 and omega-3 essential fatty acids. Modern diets based on industrial seed oils can contain almost 20 times more omega-6 than omega-3, because industrial seed oils contain very high amounts of omega-6.

## Eighth Principle

You've probably heard about omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids. These are the two main types of polyunsaturated fat molecules. We need both in small amounts—and in the right balance, ideally about two to three times more omega-6 than omega-3. We get omega-6 from nuts, grains and seeds as well as animal fats like butter, and we get omega-3 mainly from seafood, flax oil, organ meats and egg yolks from pasture-fed hens.

Unfortunately, most modern diets contain large quantities of omega-6 from industrial seed oils—these oils can be almost 100 percent omega-6—and not enough omega-3. However, too much omega-3 is also problematic—ailments such as stroke and bleeding are common in those consuming the Inuit diet with too much omega-3, and that can happen in modern diets when people take too much fish oil or flax seed oil.

A balance of small amounts of omega-6 and omega-3 is key, something that is easy to achieve by simply eliminating all industrial seed oils from the diet (which contain mostly omega-6) and including seafood and pasture-raised animal foods for omega-3. Please note that we do not recommend fish oil. Fish oil is an industrial product that is boiled for hours, which renders the delicate omega-3 fatty acids detrimental to our health.

Two types of polyunsaturated fat molecules are particularly important in human diets: Arachidonic acid (AA), an omega-6 fatty acid that is found in animal fats, organ meats and egg yolks; and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), an omega-3 fatty acid that is found in fatty fish, shellfish, unheated cod liver oil, egg yolks and some organ meats. We need both in small amounts as a balance of omega-6 AA and omega-3 DHA.

AA is very important for good digestion and healthy skin. Symptoms of AA deficiency include rashes, dry skin, digestive problems, food intolerances and reproductive difficulties. DHA is very important for the nervous system. Symptoms of DHA deficiency include numbness, tingling, weakness, pain, psychological problems, learning problems and eye problems. Deficiencies of both AA and DHA can cause poor growth, poor immunity and inflammation.

### For further information:

#### Articles

- On essential fatty acids:  
[westonaprice.org/know-your-fats/essential-fatty-acids/](http://westonaprice.org/know-your-fats/essential-fatty-acids/)
- Articles on industrial fats and oils:  
[westonaprice.org/know-your-fats/industrial-fats-and-oils/](http://westonaprice.org/know-your-fats/industrial-fats-and-oils/)
- Are You Over-dosing on Omega-3s:  
[nourishingtraditions.com/are-we-over-dosing-on-omega-3s-or-why-we-need-fish-liver-oil-not-fish-oil/](http://nourishingtraditions.com/are-we-over-dosing-on-omega-3s-or-why-we-need-fish-liver-oil-not-fish-oil/)

#### Wise Traditions Podcast [westonaprice.org/podcast/](http://westonaprice.org/podcast/)

- Episode 90: Principle 8: Strike the Right Balance of Omega-3 & Omega-6 Fatty Acids with Sally Fallon Morell
- Episode 265: Optimize your Ratio of Essential Fatty Acids with Sally Fallon Morell

#### Video

- Saturated fats, polyunsaturated oils and omega-3 and 6:  
[westonaprice.org/category/video/saturated-fats-polyunsaturated-oils-and-omega-3-and-6/](http://westonaprice.org/category/video/saturated-fats-polyunsaturated-oils-and-omega-3-and-6/)

#### Recipes

- Dressings, Sauces and Spreads: [westonaprice.org/category/our-blogs/recipe-of-the-week/dressings/](http://westonaprice.org/category/our-blogs/recipe-of-the-week/dressings/)