

those old family recipes. You might want to start with some recipes that are tried and true in a stevia cookbook while you get the feel for it, and then venture out on your own. A couple to check out include two volumes of *Baking With Stevia: Recipes for the Sweet Leaf* by Rita D. DePuydt, and *Stevia Sweet Recipes: Sugar Free Naturally!* by Jeffrey Goettemoeller.

**Fish or flax?**

**Q:** I've noticed that both fish oil and flaxseed oil claim to have omega-3s, but I notice that you recommend fish oil more often. Can you tell me the difference? I'd prefer to take flax, but not if it isn't as effective.

**JVW:** It's true, both fish and flax are good sources of omega-3's, and for people who will not consume fish for any reason, flax will do. Flaxseed oil is also less expensive, which can be an important consideration as well.

The main difference is that flaxseed oil contains only alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), which is the parent compound from which other omega-3 fatty acids are derived. This leaves it to your body to do the conversion to the other forms it needs, eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). The problem is that the conversion is not always that efficient, and the body often uses the ALA for extra energy, leaving less for conversion to the other types. Fish oil, on the other hand, contains the other forms and delivers them directly to your body with no conversion necessary.

Whatever form you decide to take, don't forget to back it up with an extra 400 IU of vitamin E (as mixed tocopherols) to prevent the fatty acids from breaking down too rapidly in your body.

**What is...EFA, EPA, etc...?**

As omega-3 and omega-6 essential fatty acids become more popular and available, you will be seeing the different types on product labels. I thought you might like a quick at-a-glance glossary to keep the acronyms straight for your next trip to the store:

**EFA:** essential fatty acids

**EPA:** eicosapentaenoic acid (an omega-3 oil)

**DHA:** docosahexaenoic acid (an omega-3 oil)

**ALA:** alpha linolenic acid (an omega-3 oil)

**GLA:** is gamma linolenic acid (an omega-6 oil)

**LA:** linolenic acid (an omega-6 oil)

Yours in good health,  
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Sources:

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