

# Abstract

J Autism Dev Disord. 2010 Aug 4. [Epub ahead of print]

## A Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial of Omega-3 Fatty Acids for Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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**OBJECTIVE:** We conducted a pilot randomized controlled trial to determine the feasibility and initial safety and efficacy of omega-3 fatty acids (1.3 g/day) for the treatment of hyperactivity in 27 children ages 3-8 with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

**METHODS AND RESULTS:** After 12 weeks, hyperactivity, as measured by the Aberrant Behavior Checklist, improved 2.7 (+/-4.8) points in the omega-3 group compared to 0.3 (+/-7.2) points in the placebo group ( $p = 0.40$ ; effect size = 0.38). Correlations were found between decreases in five fatty acid levels and decreases in hyperactivity, and the treatment was well tolerated.

**CONCLUSION:** Although this pilot study did not find a statistically significant benefit from omega-3 fatty acids, the small sample size does not rule out small to moderate beneficial effects.

PMID: 20683766

