

Omega-3 Fatty Acid Compounds Position Statement

Omega-3 Fatty Acid Compounds are non-formulary in North Central London.

Prescribers should not initiate omega-3 fatty acid compounds for any new patients.

Patients established on omega-3 fatty acid compounds should be reviewed with a view to changing to a more effective lipid modifying agent.

NHS England category: Item of low clinical effectiveness, where there is a lack of robust evidence of clinical effectiveness or there are significant safety concerns.

- Omega-3 fatty acids are essential fatty acids which are eicosanoid precursors and component of cell membrane.
- NICE CG 172 (Myocardial Infarction) recommends that patients should not be offered or advised to use omega-3 fatty acids. [1]
- Patients receiving omega-3 fatty acids following a myocardial infarction should be reviewed with a view to stopping this treatment. Dietary advice (consuming two to four portions of oily fish per week) should be provided [2]
- NICE CG 181 (Lipid Modification) recommends that omega-3 fatty acid compounds should not be offered for the prevention of CVD because there is no evidence of clinical benefit for either primary or secondary prevention, including in patients with T2DM. [3]
- Patients receiving omega-3 fatty acids for hypertriglyceridaemia should be reviewed, with a view to switching to a fibrate or statin. [2]
- NCL guidance for lipid modification recommends that omega-3 fatty acids should not be used as a lipid-lowering therapy.
- For patients receiving appropriate treatment for their condition, if they also want to purchase omega-3 fatty acids over the counter, there is no evidence of harm from this, although there is also no evidence of benefit. [4]
- The British Dietetics Association has advice for patients on dietary sources of omega-3 fatty acids:
<https://www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts/hearthealth.pdf>
- PrescQIPP has made available a patient information leaflet explaining why omega-3 fatty acids will no longer be prescribed [[link](#)] *

PrescQIPP documents are available to organisations that subscribe to their service.

References

- [1] NICE, "CG 172: Myocardial infarction: cardiac rehabilitation and prevention of further cardiovascular disease," 11 2013. [Online]. Available: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg172>.
- [2] PrescQIPP, "Bulletin 47: Omega-3 Fatty Acids," October 2013. [Online]. Available: <https://www.prescqipp.info/omega-3-fatty-acids/send/85-omega-3-fatty-acids/787-bulletin-47-omega-3-fatty-acids>.
- [3] NICE, "CG 181: Cardiovascular disease: risk assessment and reduction, including lipid modification," 09 2016. [Online]. Available: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg181/evidence/lipid-modification-update-full-guideline-pdf-243786637>.
- [4] NICE, "Clinical Guideline 172: Mi Secondary Prevention (Full Guideline) (page 91)," 11 2013. [Online]. Available: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg172/evidence/myocardial-infarction-secondary-prevention-full-guideline-pdf-248682925>.

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