



## HEALTH & HEALING

# The ultimate comfort food?

by **Mike Ventresca**  
Vital Choice

**W**hen you think of comfort foods what do you think of? You probably thought of something sweet like chocolate or salty like potato chips. Here's one you probably didn't think of...fish!



**Mike Ventresca**

Okay, maybe it's not the most comforting of comfort foods, but according to recent research it may do more to really help your emotional and mental health than any tasty treat ever could.

Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine have found that omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil appear to play an important role in emotional and mental health. In a 2006 study of 106 healthy volunteers, researchers found that participants who had lower blood levels of omega-3 fatty acids were more likely to report mild or moderate symptoms of depression, have a more negative outlook and to be more impulsive. Conversely, those with higher blood levels of omega-3s were found to be more agreeable. In fact, according to Sarah Conklin, Ph.D., at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, "A number of previous studies have linked low levels of omega-3

to clinically significant conditions such as depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, substance abuse and attention deficit disorder."

Experts point to several preliminary studies that suggest omega-3s may help bring mood back into balance by producing structural changes in areas of the brain associated with emotional arousal and regulation. Another possible explanation according to Andrew L. Stoll, MD, of Harvard Medical School is that omega-3s work to stabilize the walls of nerve cells, a similar action to popular medications without serious side effects.

If you're interested in trying fish oil for emotional well-being, I highly recommend Omega-3 Mood from Country Life. Omega-3 Mood features a unique balance of omega-3s not found in other brands including a high level of EPA, a specific omega-3 fatty acid shown to help regulate mood.

*Mike Ventresca is co-owner of Vital Choice, a health food and nutrition store located at 9243 Sprague Road in North Royalton's Timber Ridge Plaza. The phone number is 440-885-9505. Open Monday thru Friday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday noon to 5 p.m.*

This information is intended for informational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose or provide treatment for any condition. If you have any concerns about your own health, you should always consult with a healthcare professional.

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