

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title:	Assessing the Omega-3 Long Chain Polyunsaturated Fatty Acid Intakes in New Zealanders using a validated a semi-quantitative FFQ
Lead Researchers:	Dr Lillian Morton Associate Professor Andrea Braakhuis
Ethics Approval Number:	AH30043

You are invited to take part in a University of Auckland research study which aims to assess the dietary omega-3 fatty acid intake in adults living in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This information sheet contains the information about the study to help you decide if you would like to take part. Please read the information carefully. Before you decide to take part in this study you are welcome to ask us any questions, and you may want to talk about the study with other people, such as family, whānau, or friends.

Whether you choose to take part is entirely your choice and you will be asked to provide consent before completing the questionnaire.

Why are we doing the study?

Omega-3 fatty acids must come from the diet because the human body cannot make them. This makes them essential fatty acids, and there are recommended daily intakes for adults in New Zealand. However, it is unknown how much Omega-3 adults in New Zealand consume, and what foods contribute to Omega-3 fatty acid intakes in New Zealand. We are interested in the dietary intake of Omega-3 fatty acids in New Zealand adults because of the health benefits they provide.

Who can take part in the study?

To take part in this study, you must be over 18 years old and be able to read and understand English well enough to complete the questionnaire.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire. This questionnaire is called a food frequency questionnaire (FFQ) and asks you about foods you have eaten over the past three months, including how often you eat them and how much you usually eat at a time.

We will also ask a few general questions about you, such as your age, gender, what region you live in, dietary patterns (e.g. if you are vegetarian), and health (e.g. if you have diabetes). Your responses will be completely anonymous, and we will not collect any information that could identify you. You cannot take part in this study if you do not consent to the collection of this information.

The questionnaire uses multiple choice buttons and has pictures to help you answer how much you eat at a time. We only ask about the foods you have eaten in the last three months, and we only ask about foods that contain certain amounts of omega-3.

The questionnaire takes about **15 minutes** to complete. You can complete this questionnaire on your phone, computer or tablet at any time that suits you.

Your answers will be used to understand patterns of omega-3 intake in New Zealand adults. We will not be assessing you individually, and your results will not be provided back to you.

Your responses will be completely anonymous, and we will not collect any information that could identify you.

Do you have to take part in this study?

No. Taking part in this study is voluntary. You can stop taking part at any time during the questionnaire by closing the questionnaire browser. You do not have to give a reason.

Are there any risks?

There are no expected risks from taking part in this study.

Are there any benefits?

Completing the food frequency questionnaire is interesting and you may find value in seeing the different foods that contain omega-3 fatty acids in the questionnaire.

This study will provide valuable information about the omega-3 intakes of New Zealand adults. This will help inform health strategies and future research.

Will you receive anything for your time?

You will have the option at the end of the questionnaire to enter a draw to win one of two \$250 supermarket vouchers. This is voluntary and to enter you will need to provide your email address. If you choose to enter the prize draw, your email address will be collected separately and cannot be linked to your questionnaire answers.

What happens to the information we collect?

The information you provide will be used for research purposes only and your information will be kept private. Your questionnaire responses will be anonymous, and the data will only be seen by the research team. We will not collect your name or other identifying information. Your questionnaire responses will be stored securely on University of Auckland-managed systems and protected by the university's data security and privacy policies. This information will be stored for a maximum of 6 years.

Who is leading the research?

This research study is being led by researchers from the University of Auckland.

Researcher and study contact:

Dr Lillian Morton

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Principal Investigator:

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Who is funding the research?

This research has received funding from the Ministry for Primary Industries Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures (SFFF) and Meat Industry Association Innovation Ltd. The funders have no role in the overall study design, data collection, analysis, interpretation of findings, or publication.

Has the study been approved?

This study has been approved by an independent group of people called the Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee (AHREC), who check that studies meet established ethical standards. This study was approved by AHREC on 31 July 2026. Reference: AH30034.

Who do you contact if you have questions or concerns?

If you have questions about this study, please contact Lillian Morton from the research team.

If you have concerns about your rights or how the study is being carried out, you can contact the **Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee (AHREC)** by email

ahrec@auckland.ac.nz

To speak to someone not involved in the study you can contact an **independent health and disability advocate** at advocacy@hdc.org.nz or by phoning 0800 555 050.

If you require Māori cultural support, talk to your whānau in the first instance. For further Māori cultural support, you may also contact the administrator for **He Kamaka Wairoa (Māori Health Team)** - Phone: 09 486 8324 ext. 2324.