

Excerpts taken from an interview with *The Saturday Evening Post* and Dr Andrew Stoll, director of the Psychopharmacology Research Laboratory at Harvard Medical School - McLean Hospital

Source: Battling the Blues - Ongoing research shows that omega-3 fatty acids help treat depression. By Patrick Perry, *McLean in the News*, June 2005

Dr Stoll conducted a landmark study on the role of omega-3 fatty acids in bipolar disorder and discusses below:

- **The benefits that eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) provides...**

“...No one has replicated the findings of our original study as yet. The real story is that there are now numerous positive studies on the benefits of omega-3 in unipolar depression, schizophrenia, borderline personality disorder, ADHD, and Huntington’s disease. It seems that many disorders respond to omega-3s. **Three of the four studies in depression used EPA, or EPA plus DHA, and they worked. The fourth study used pure DHA - important for developing babies, pregnant women, and nursing mothers - and it failed. People hold onto stores of DHA for a long time, so you don’t need to replenish levels as often as with EPA, which is turned over constantly into eicosanoid hormones...**”

- **Advice on how to determine the omega 3 content in a fish oil supplement...**

“...To determine omega-3 content, simply take the amount of **EPA** or **EPA** plus DHA per serving, as listed on the label, and divide it by the serving size to determine how much omega-3 is in each capsule. That’s not understood well by many people. It is important that people read labels carefully. They get fooled...”

- **Why the human body needs more EPA than docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)...**

“...Most adults and children seem to have adequate or nearly adequate stores of DHA in their brains. Believe it or not, these DHA stores in the membranes of brain cells date back to a person’s fetal life and is provided by their mothers. **DHA turns over very slowly, so you don’t need much to get by.** In contrast, **EPA is turned over very rapidly**, as it is used for eicosanoid synthesis. For this reason, **we think people are also much more depleted in EPA than DHA.**”