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Rising heart diseases & changing dietary habits spur growth of Omega-3 market in India

Laxmi Yadav, Mumbai
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Rising rate of cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) and changing dietary habits have led to growth of Omega-3 fatty acids market in India and worldwide.

According to the American Medical Association, heart disease was the most significant cause of mortality with 690,882 deaths. The Food and Drug Administration has approved Omega-3 supplements to treat disorders such as severe hypertriglyceridemia in adults. The FDA has also approved Epanova and Omtryg, which contain eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA)/docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and dietary supplements.

The global Omega 3 market was assessed at US$ 2.10 billion in 2020, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7.8 per cent predicted from 2020 to 2028. The increased importance of immunity development after the Covid-19 pandemic has reinforced the market's driving force, said Dr Sanjay Agrawal, leading pharmaceutical consultant.

The infant formula segment is predicted to increase at the quickest CAGR throughout the forecast period, owing to rising demand for packaged baby nutrition products as the working population grows. The nervous system, vision, brain, and overall growth of an infant are all aided by Omega-3 DHA, he said.

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Omega -3 –fatty acids have been referred to as essential fatty acids, as they cannot be synthesized in the body and hence have to be supplemented externally.

Omega-3 fatty acids are indicated in hypertriglyceridemia/hyperlipidemia and associated clinical conditions such as pre-existing coronary artery disease, post-myocardial infarction, post coronary artery bypasses surgery/revascularization procedures etc. They are beneficial in inflammatory and autoimmune disorders, e.g. rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, etc.

"The product demand is predicted to rise as more Omega 3 elements are included in the diet to support heart and brain health. Sedentary lifestyles, the work-from-home tendency, and a lack of physical activity, especially among people in their 30s and 40s, are predicted to drive growing product demand. Furthermore, rising consumer investment in healthcare and well-being is expected to propel the industry forward," stated Dr Agrawal.

Due to the expanding product application breadth in medicines, an increasing number of Omega 3-based pharmaceutical product launches by market participants is likely to boost the market growth, he added.

For example, BASF Nutrition and Health, in collaboration with Ideogen, developed an Omega 3 product to treat non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD), a chronic illness, in November 2019.

Manufacturers are aggressively adopting modern manufacturing technologies. To ensure optimal delivery of the healthful properties of fish oil, manufacturers focus on the effective removal of environmental pollutants from fish oil, limiting oxidation in the production process, and concentrating the Omega 3 content in the final product. Smartfish, for example, has developed manufacturing procedures that prevent oil from oxidizing and give high-temperature tolerance, he quipped.

"Krill oil is a possible source of Omega 3. It is becoming more popular due to its superior qualities, such as increased water solubility and faster absorption in the human body after consumption than traditional fish oil. Players are concentrating their efforts on obtaining krill oil through efficient methods. Enzymotec, for example, uses Multi-Stage Oil (MSO) extraction technology to make krill oil, which has been clinically demonstrated to be more effective than fish oil at increasing Omega 3 levels in human blood," stated the pharmaceutical consultant.

Because of the growing trend of vegetarianism, manufacturers are focused on non-fish sources for extracting Omega 3. Companies are increasingly looking into algal sources since Omega 3 extracted from algae has no fishy flavour or odor, making it an acceptable alternative for the vegan community. Polaris introduced Omegavie DHA 800 oil, which is derived from the microalgae Schizochytrium sp., in June 2021. The oil has a high concentration of DHA, about 800 mg/g, which can be utilized to make vegan DHA capsules or tablets. As per the latest updates, from 2020 to 2028, the global Omega 3 market is predicted to increase at a compound yearly growth rate of 7.8 per cent, reaching US$ 3.82 billion, he summed up.

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