



July 11, 2013

**RE: Response to SELECT Study on Omega-3 Consumption and Prostate Cancer Risk**

Dear Valued Customer:

A new study, *"Plasma Phospholipid Fatty Acids and Prostate Cancer Risk in the SELECT Trial,"* published online in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*, has generated recent media interest and inquiries from the public.

After reviewing the details of the Selenium and Vitamin E Cancer Prevention Trial (SELECT), and in consultation with our scientific advisors and experts in the omega-3 industry, we believe that the precautions against omega-3 consumption in this study are largely without merit. The totality of current scientific evidence suggests otherwise. Generally speaking, the SELECT trial has a number of methodological flaws that have misled the public about the risk of omega-3 consumption and prostate cancer. These are as follows:

The initial intent of this study was *not* to evaluate omega-3 intake and prostate cancer risk. The results may be confounded by the initial intended treatments: selenium and Vitamin E. There is no documentation of fish oil or dietary fish intake in the study group. Also, researchers did not discuss diet or supplementation at the beginning, during, or end of the study.

The measure of evaluating omega-3 intake in this study was plasma phospholipid levels, which is not a good gauge of long-term omega-3 consumption. Plasma phospholipid levels can be influenced dramatically by a single meal, or even the timing of a fish oil dose. These levels can increase or decrease, based on a single meal within a 48-hour period. Furthermore, fatty acid levels were taken from just one blood sample provided by participants upon enlistment in the study, not at the time of diagnosis. And, the statistical model that was used to draw conclusions is appropriate for drug consumption at regular daily intervals, where levels stay fairly constant, but not for omega-3 blood serum levels, which may vary considerably based on diet

Finally, the researchers base their conclusions on very small differences in mean omega-3 blood plasma phospholipid levels. The increased prostate cancer risks they ascribe to men who consume large amounts of omega-3 is based on a level of 4.66% in the cancer group, versus a level of 4.48% in the control group. As noted by the Global Organization for EPA and DHA Omega-3 (GOED), "If the findings were true, then prostate cancer would be rampant in any country with high seafood consumption, (Scandinavia, Japan, etc.) and conversely, low level consumption should be protective. Clearly this is not the case."

Omega-3 fish oil is among the most well researched nutritional supplements in existence. Over 10,000 studies have been conducted, providing sufficient evidence to state with confidence that omega-3s are beneficial for health.

We hope this response will reassure those who have been understandably concerned by the attention this study has received in the media. As an industry leader, we constantly review the latest research on omega-3s and health to help develop our product line and our manufacturing technology. Nordic Naturals has a corporate commitment and long-established history of educating individuals on the science, safety, and efficacy of omega-3s. This is because we are, and always have been, committed to delivering the world's safest, most effective omega oils.

Attached to this letter is the press release from the Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN), a trade organization who has released an official statement responding to the SELECT study noting that the "omega-3 conclusions are overblown."

We greatly appreciate your continued support.

In health,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keri Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Keri Marshall MS, ND  
Chief Medical Officer