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Dispelling the Krill Oil Myth: Marketing vs Science

We have had several questions this week about Krill Oil, most likely these are the result of the misleading information contained in the recent marketing blitz to sell krill oil. Let's take a closer look at the reality of Krill Oil versus Omega Sufficiency™ natural 18:12 EPA:DHA ratio Fish Oil.

Proponents of Krill argue that the phospholipid form is the exact form that is used in cell membranes so Krill is superior. They also heavily market the fact that Krill contains high levels of antioxidants and that harvesting krill is safer for the planet. These marketing strategies are not only false they are dangerous for both humans and the planet.

The biochemical difference between Krill Oil and Fish Oil is the molecular package the EPA and DHA are delivered in. Krill Oil is in the phospholipid form and Fish Oil is in the triglyceride form (many fish oils (concentrates) are in the synthetic ethyl ester form but this is a completely different issue - see our natural vs concentrated fish oil document at www.innatechoice.com).

There are several significant problems with this marketing strategy. The first is that there is absolutely no evidence that delivering EPA and DHA in the phospholipid form has any added benefit. There is NO EVIDENCE that humans require the ingestion of EPA and DHA in the phospholipids form. Phospholipids are NOT essential nutrients for humans - EPA and DHA in the triglyceride form as contained in Omega Sufficiency™ are! Think about it, our species has NEVER consumed krill, how could we require EPA and DHA from krill?

Genetically humans are designed to ingest omega 3 fatty acids in the triglyceride form of EPA and DHA contained in wild animals and fish (two foods we have consumed throughout the history of our species). To infer that humans need the phospholipids from krill is scientifically absurd.

There are literally thousands of published scientific articles showing the benefit of Fish Oil and only a handful exploring the use of Krill. Fish Oil is a known and proven way to supply EPA and DHA and it is the most innate, natural way to get these essential fatty acids. It is the way that mimics the way the healthiest people on earth get their fatty acids. The healthy Inuit and Nordic peoples that were the subjects of the studies proving the importance of Omega 3 fatty acids NEVER CONSUMED KRILL - they consumed EPA and DHA in the natural triglyceride 18:12 ratio as found in Omega Sufficiency™ - this is EXACTLY why we keep our oil in the natural form - it is the closest thing possible to consuming the fish! A second problem with the Krill superiority marketing strategy is that the actual amount of EPA and DHA per capsule in Krill is relatively low as compared to fish oil making achieving sufficiency both more difficult and more expensive. Krill oil has much less EPA and DHA than fish oil.

A third problem with the Krill superiority marketing strategy is the claim that krill is superior because of the antioxidants it contains. At closer examination what becomes apparent is that the antioxidant levels in krill, although high in relative terms, are very low in absolute terms and are absolutely USELESS levels in terms of overall health for humans.

If anyone is convinced that the antioxidant levels found in krill represent a significant contribution to the antioxidant levels needed by humans they have been dangerously deceived.

Finally, and very importantly, my biggest concern with the Krill Oil superiority myth (being the son of a Ph.D. marine biologist), is that Krill is the foundation of the food chain for so many oceanic species. Commercial Krill harvesting has already been banned in several major oceans and the implications of over-harvesting Krill are devastating. Harvesting krill is an ecological disaster waiting to happen.

The fish caught for manufacturing fish oil are very tightly regulated. Also, only a very small proportion of the current anchovy, sardine, and mackerel harvest goes toward fish oil for humans. The vast majority of the harvest has been for pet food, fertilizers and other non-human use. Without increasing the harvest at all there is HUGE potential to increase the production of fish oil for human consumption.

The Krill Oil superiority myth is based on the science of marketing not the science of biology or human physiology.