



22 April 2021

Omega-3 status testing now available

In partnership with the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI), SA Pathology now offers omega-3 status testing for all women with singleton pregnancies as part of the established SAMSAS program.

The collaboration aims to reduce the incidence of premature births, and follows the release of the latest National Health and Medical Research Council and Department of Health National Pregnancy Care guidelines.

How requesting providers can order the Omega-3 status test

- Discuss the omega-3 status test and refer woman to the *information for families* pamphlet.
- Tick the omega-3 status test on the updated SAMSAS request form.
- The omega-3 status test results will be reported to the requesting provider as a standalone report and will be available on OACIS.

Omega-3 status test results and recommendations

Omega-3 status	Recommendation
Less than 3.7%	For a low status, take omega-3 fatty acid supplements after receiving the omega-3 results until 37 weeks to reduce the risk of early preterm birth. Suggested dose: 800 mg DHA and 100 mg EPA per day Typical suitable supplements include Infantem* (Pharmamark) and Omega Brain (Blackmores)
Between 3.7 and 4.3%	For a moderate omega-3 status, no action required . If already taking omega-3 fatty acids as part of a multivitamin and mineral supplement or a standalone supplement, this may continue.
Above 4.3%	For a sufficient status, stop any omega-3 fatty acid supplements . Risk of early preterm birth is low and additional omega-3 supplementation may increase this risk.

* Algal oil supplement of DHA and EPA.

Contraindications to omega-3 fatty acid supplements

- Omega-3 fatty acid supplements should be avoided for women requiring heparin because of possible additive anti-coagulant effects.
- Low dose aspirin can be taken with omega-3 fatty acid supplements. Recent randomised trials of omega-3 fatty acid interventions have included women on low dose aspirin without increase in adverse events.

SAHMRI and SA Pathology offer a range of support materials, including *information for health professionals* pamphlets, *information for families* pamphlets, and explainer videos. Copies are being delivered to practices with the updated SAMSAS request forms. They are also available by visiting the sahmri.org/omega3 website.

To order the maternal serum screening test request forms, please call the SAMSAS Program on (08) 8161 7285. The updated [SAMSAS request form](#) is also available via the SA Pathology website.

For further information about omega-3 testing and results interpretation, please visit sahmri.org/omega3 or call the omega-3 status test hotline 0438 273 155.

Regards,

Dr Tom Dodd

Clinical Service Director
SA Pathology

www.sapathology.sa.gov.au



Government of South Australia
SA Health

