

Fish oil pills: An industry built on empty promises

By Peter Whoriskey, Washington Post

For anyone wondering about whether to take a fish oil pill to improve your health, the Web site of the National Institutes of Health has some advice.

Yes. And no.

One page on the Web site endorses taking fish oil supplements, saying they are likely effective for heart disease, because they contain the “beneficial” fatty acids known as omega-3s.

But another page suggests that, in fact, the fish oil pills seem useless: “Omega-3s in supplement form have not been shown to protect against heart disease.”

“I can see how you might think that there is some inconsistency,” Paul R. Thomas, a scientific consultant in NIH’s Office of Dietary Supplements wrote in response to questions about the NIH pages.

Few issues better reflect the American confusion over diet.

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