

Evening Primrose Oil Reduces PMS Pain & Increases Fertility



EVENING PRIMROSE OIL

Reduces PMS Pain & Increases Fertility



Dr. Axe
FOOD IS MEDICINE

It wasn't until recently that evening primrose oil was used for its amazing health benefits, so you may be surprised to learn about the impact it can have on your [hormone health](#), skin, hair and bones.

The Native Americans and European settlers used primrose, a wildflower that grows in eastern and central North America, for food. The seeds of the flower are gathered and cold pressed for their oil; the oil is then encapsulated for dietary supplement use so people can take advantage of the evening primrose oil health benefits. The oil is high in essential fatty acids — which provide the building blocks for cell membranes and a variety of hormones and hormone-like substances. Essential fatty acids are necessary for human health, but the body can't make them — you have to get them through food. Along with [omega-3 fatty acids](#), omega-6 fatty acids play a crucial role in brain function, as well as normal growth and development. (1)

Your body needs a healthy balance of essential fatty acids, such as the omega-6, found in evening primrose, and [omega-3](#), found in [fish oil](#). [Consuming fats](#) slows down absorption so we can go longer without feeling hungry; they also act as carriers for important fat-soluble [vitamin A](#), [vitamin D](#), [vitamin E](#) and [vitamin K](#). Dietary fats are needed for the conversion of carotene to vitamin A, for mineral absorption and for a host of other processes.

Evening primrose oil also has a range of therapeutic properties. It's known to help reduce the pain associated with PMS, and reduce skin irritations and conditions. The oil could also be used as an [anti-inflammatory agent](#), and it's used to treat problems with autoimmune diseases.

8 Evening Primrose Oil Benefits

1. Hormones

Women around the world take evening primrose oil to [naturally treat PMS](#) symptoms because of its essential fatty acid content. Getting enough [omega-6 fatty acids](#), such as LA and GLA, is shown to support overall hormonal function within the body. During a woman's premenstrual period, she experiences breast tenderness, bloating, water retention, acne, depression, irritability, foggy thinking and headaches — these symptoms reportedly subside after using evening primrose oil, according to a study in *Lipids*. (2)

Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) may be one of the most complex and common — it's an endocrine disorder in women of reproductive age. PCOS impacts fertility and has serious health implications as well, especially when left untreated. Some symptoms of PCOS include irregular menstrual cycle, absent period, **obesity**, acne, **balding**, excessive menstrual bleeding and ovary cysts. Consuming essential fatty acids creates a healthy environment for conception; they help you **lose weight** and produce **balanced hormones**. Evening primrose oil helps increase cervical mucus and metabolic function. I recommend that you take 1,500 milligrams, beginning on the first day of your menstrual cycle, until ovulation.

2. Labor

The omega-6 fatty acids found in evening primrose oil are necessary for the production and synthesis of prostaglandin E. Prostaglandins aren't hormones — instead, they're messengers that act on many different cells in various areas of the body. They help control the [regulation of hormones](#) and manage proper cell growth.

Without enough prostaglandins, you have an increased tendency to form blood clots, [inflammation](#), high blood pressure, irritation of the digestive tract, depressed immune function, sterility, cell proliferation, cancer and weight gain.

Women can use evening primrose oil to prepare the cervix for labor. During the last few weeks of pregnancy, the mother can take evening primrose oil capsules in order to ripen the cervix, or she can rub the cervix with evening primrose oil. Midwives have used evening primrose during the last trimester of pregnancy for hundreds of years.

3. Fertility

The rate of infertility continues to increase in America and around the world. Many blame the toxins in our modern world polluting the body and compromising precious functions, such as fertility, pregnancy and child birth.

An omega-3 fatty acid, GLA, has been shown to increase the production of cervical mucus, a factor in successful reproduction and thus a [way to beat infertility](#). Cervical fluid is vital for allowing the sperm to swim freely through the cervix. Having a **healthy**

pregnancy is more difficult for women with little or no cervical fluid because the sperm have trouble moving and there may not be a friendly environment for the sperm to sustain themselves.

To increase cervical mucus, the recommended dosage is 500 milligrams of evening primrose oil — three times a day. If you aren't getting results after trying 1,500 milligrams a day, double your dose during the next cycle.

The high levels of essential fatty acids present in evening primrose oil have a direct effect on uterine cells as well — this enables another evening primrose oil health benefit. These essential fatty acids cause the contraction and relaxation of muscle tissue, and this tones the uterine muscles in preparation for pregnancy. Consuming evening primrose oil for its fatty acid content is best only when **naturally trying to get pregnant** — not for women who are already pregnant because the contraction of the uterus may be problematic.

An animal study done at the Department of Animal Nutrition and Management included male and female blue foxes that were given evening primrose oil during mating season in order to measure its effect on reproductive performance. An interesting result was an increase in litter size, mainly as an effect of male treatment, which might indicate that evening primrose oil benefits go beyond the uterus and have an impact on semen quality as well. (3)

8 EVENING PRIMROSE OIL BENEFITS

1

Hormones



Women around the world take evening primrose oil to treat the symptoms of PMS because of its essential fatty acid content. Getting enough omega-6 fatty acids, such as LA and GLA, has been shown to support overall hormonal function within the body, reduce PMS symptoms, create a healthy environment for conception, and help you to lose weight and produce balanced hormones.

Natural Rx

Take 1500 milligrams – beginning on the first day of your menstrual cycle, until ovulation.

The omega-6 fatty acids that are found in evening primrose oil are necessary for the production and synthesis of prostaglandin E. Prostaglandins help to control the regulation of hormones and manage proper cell growth. Women can use evening primrose oil to prepare the cervix for labor.

Natural Rx

During the last few weeks of pregnancy, the mother can take evening primrose oil capsules in order to ripen the cervix, or she can rub the cervix with evening primrose oil.

Labor



3

Fertility

An omega-3 fatty acid, GLA, has been shown to increase the production of cervical mucus, a factor in successful reproduction. Cervical fluid is vital for allowing the sperm to swim freely

4. Acne

Hormonal acne can be a troublesome for many people, especially teenagers who are dealing with fluctuating hormones during puberty. A hormonal imbalance can lead to acne in teens and adults alike, and many people don't realize that [acne can be treated naturally](#). This is especially true for women because they go through regular periods of hormone fluctuations — this includes the menstrual cycle and menopause.

In order to treat hormonal acne, you need to tackle the root of the problem — the [hormonal imbalance](#). No topical treatment does that for you; it only treats the already existing pimples or scars. The omega-6 fatty acids present in evening primrose oil are what help you to regulate your hormone levels and cure your hormonal acne issues. These fatty acids also play a role in cell structure, improving nerve function and promoting skin elasticity.

To take advantage of this evening primrose oil health benefit regarding hormonal acne, you can take an evening primrose oil capsule daily — much like a [fish oil](#) capsule. You can also put the oil on your face directly. This is known to help with the healing process and improve the overall appearance of your skin.

5. Hair Loss

Men and women struggle with hair loss, and sometimes the best way to prevent this issue is with diet or supplements. Hormones in both men and women are responsible for many body processes. When it comes to hair, hormones play a significant role — including in the hair pattern found on your head, as well as the rest of your body.

The [hormonal cause of hair loss](#) in men is due to the hair follicles' sensitivity to a hormone called DHT (5 α -Dihydrotestosterone). DHT is a male androgen hormone that causes follicles to shrink, resulting in a shorter life span and decrease in hair production. Normally after hairs fall out, another one starts to grow from the same follicle, but when DHT is high, hair growth decreases. Male pattern baldness (known as androgenetic alopecia in men) follows a pattern of a receding hairline that progresses to an "M" shape and then continues to the familiar "U" shape.

Female pattern baldness (androgenetic alopecia in women) is characterized by thinning on the top or the center of the head. Female hair loss is generally due to high levels of stress, a **hormone imbalance**, thyroid conditions or toxic exposure.

Essential omega-6 fatty, GLA, which comes from consuming capsules of evening primrose oil, can be highly effective in the **fight against hair loss**. Try taking 500 milligrams twice a day — you will begin to see results in six to eight weeks.

You can also rub evening primrose oil into your hair or add it to your shampoo. In a study done at the University of Maryland, 86 people who were experiencing hair loss massaged their scalps with **essential oils**. They did this daily for seven months; at the end, those who used essential oils daily noticed significant hair regrowth. Besides using evening primrose oil for this remedy, try **lavender**, cypress and **lemongrass essential oils**, too.

6. Skin Health

Evening primrose oil has proved to be a valuable treatment choice for people suffering from skin conditions, such as eczema, psoriasis and atopic dermatitis. Studies published in the International Journal of Cosmetic Science have even shown that evening primrose oil can help with age-related structural and functional changes in skin tissues, such as redness, firmness, roughness and fatigue resistance. (4)

Eczema is generally caused by an **allergic response to foods**, chemicals or other substances, such as perfumes or soaps; it causes dry, red, itchy skin that can blister or crack.

Research shows that people with eczema don't have the normal ability to process fatty acids; this results in a deficiency of gamma-linolenic acid, or GLA. GLA is an omega-6 fatty acid that the body can convert to substances that reduce inflammation and cell growth.

Studies prove that evening primrose oil is remarkably effective in **relieving many symptoms of eczema**, including itching, redness and edema.

Psoriasis occurs when skin cells replicate too quickly, which results in swollen patches under the skin covered with whitish scales on top. The scaly patches, also known as psoriatic plaques, are areas of

inflammation and excessive skin production. The cause of psoriasis includes hormonal changes, poor diet and difficulty digesting protein. An evening primrose oil benefit is its ability to help [naturally cure psoriasis](#) — because the essential fatty acids help with hormone balance and digestion.

Atopic dermatitis is a chronic, relapsing, itchy skin condition that commonly starts in childhood. The condition begins with a defective metabolism of essential fatty acids. One study published in the Indian Journal of Dermatology, Venereology, and Leprology measured the impact of 500 milligrams of evening primrose oil on patients who struggled with this skin condition. Ninety-six percent (!) of the patients showed improvement after five months, and this form of treatment was noted as safe and effective. (5)

7. Rheumatoid Arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis is a type of chronic arthritis that occurs in joints on both sides of the body — such as both hands, both wrists or both knees. It's an autoimmune disease, which means that the body's immune system attacks its own healthy tissues. The cause of rheumatoid arthritis is a combination of genetic, environmental and hormonal factors.

Some studies show that primrose oil may be a suitable [natural remedy for rheumatoid arthritis](#). One study done by Arthritis Research UK measured the effects of evening primrose oil on 49 people. The data found that 94 percent of participants who got evening primrose oil reported a significant improvement of disease-related symptoms, including pain and morning stiffness. When using evening primrose oil for symptoms of arthritis, it may take one to three months for benefits to appear. (6)

8. Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is when small holes or weakened areas are formed in the bone; this can lead to [fractures](#), pain and a Dowager's hump (a hump at the upper back). One major cause of osteoporosis is a hormonal imbalance, but the good news is that there are [natural treatments for osteoporosis](#) that are highly effective — such as using evening primrose oil to regulate hormonal issues.

Some studies propose that people who don't get enough of some essential fatty acids are more likely to have bone loss than those with normal levels of these fatty acids. Taking evening primrose oil, along with fish oil and **calcium**, seems to decrease bone loss and increase bone density in elderly people with osteoporosis.

Evening Primrose Oil Side Effects

Evening primrose oil is generally safe when used in recommended dosages, which is two to eight grams daily. Reported side effects are rare and mild, and include nausea, stomach pain and headaches. Stomach pain and loose stools may mean that the dose is too high.

(7)

Recent research reveals that too much omega-6 in the diet creates an imbalance that can interfere with production of important prostaglandins. This disruption can result in increased tendency to form blood clots, inflammation, high blood pressure, irritation of the digestive tract, depressed immune function, sterility, cell proliferation, cancer and **weight gain**.

If you take medication for blood thinning or blood pressure medication, speak to your health care provider before consuming evening primrose oil. If you're prone to seizures and take a class of medications called phenothiazines, which is used to treat schizophrenia, you shouldn't take evening primrose oil because it may increase your risk of seizures.