

Evening Primrose Oil

Latin name: *Oenothera biennis*

Family: Onagraceae

Miscellaneous:

- a.k.a. EPO

Uses:

Indicated to treat mastalgia, PMS symptoms, and atopic eczema. Many top herbal experts disagree on this herb's effectiveness, with numerous success reports being noted. This herb is approved by Great Britain health authorities for treatment of the suggested ailments, but it is not recommended by the German Commission E.¹

Mechanism:

The exact mechanism is unknown, though it is related to this herb's high content of the fatty acid GLA (*cis*-gamma-linolenic acid). GLA can be converted to dihomog-LA (DGLA), a prostaglandin precursor. EPO also contains quercetin and tryptophan, a bioflavonoid and amino acid, respectively. It is hypothesized that these constituents play an intricate part in the function of this herb as well.

Dosage:

Common dose is 2.6 g/day in divided doses, increasing to 4-8 g during PMS occurrence or peak of symptoms that the patient is treating.

*If taking, product should be standardized on GLA content.

Contraindications/Side effects:

Headache, pregnancy/breastfeeding, and nausea. An interaction with phenothiazines (used for treatment of schizophrenia) has been noted.¹

Citation References:

1. Duke, J.: *Dr. Duke's Essential Herbs*: 1999, pp. 97-106.

General References:

1. Tyler, V., Robbers, J.: *Tyler's Herbs of Choice: The Therapeutic Use of Phytomedicinals*: 1999, pp. 192-193.
2. Facts And Comparisons: *Guide To Popular Natural Products*: 1999, pp. 76-80.
3. Duke, J.: *Dr. Duke's Essential Herbs*: 1999, pp. 97-106.
4. Duke, J.: *The Green Pharmacy*: 1997, pp. 228, 442-444, 476.