

The Healing Power in a Little Seed  
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Evening Primrose oil is produced from pressed small seeds of the *Oenothera biennis* plant. Evening primrose oil can be taken in supplement form as a rich source of essential fatty acids (EFA's). Evening primrose oil contains Omega-6 EFA's. Omega-3 EFA's should be taken too when supplements such as Evening Primrose oil rich in Omega-6's are taken. Fish or fish oil supplements are often recommended by health practitioners as the best source of Omega -3 EFA's. Examples from studies on evening primrose that have shown beneficial to humans are included below:

**BREAST PAIN:** Evening primrose oil given orally, 6 capsules per day for three to six months (dosage not reported), significantly reduced severe and persistent mastalgia (breast pain) in 45% of participants with cyclical mastalgia and in 27% of patients with noncyclical mastalgia. Ninety-five percent of those who responded to evening primrose oil did so within three months and 2% of the patients in both groups complained of a bloated feeling with nausea after taking the evening primrose oil (Pye, Mansel, & Hughes, 1985).

**POST VIRAL FATIGUE SYNDROME:** After three months of daily treatment with 4000 mg evening primrose oil (Epogam) and fish oil, 85% of patients in the treatment group diagnosed with postviral fatigue syndrome demonstrated significant improvement as compared with the placebo group in a double-blind, placebo-controlled trial of 63 adults (Behan, Behan, & Horrobin, 1990).

**DEPRESSION AND SCHIZOPHRENIA:** Evening primrose oil, an omega-6 EFA, contains high amounts of gamma linolenic acid (GLA). The GLA content of evening primrose oil is of interest because it is a precursor of prostaglandins, especially PGE1. Prostaglandins help regulate many metabolic functions. PGE1 is important in nerve cell transmission and is both anti-inflammatory and immunostimulating. Affecting the PGE1 pathway has been shown to improve conditions such as depression and schizophrenia, multiple sclerosis, PMS, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (Schmidt, 1997).