

From our friends at "Back to Herbs"



## Black Currant Oil

Essential fatty acids

Good fats raise High Density Lipoprotein (HDL) levels in the blood and one of the functions of (HDL) or "good cholesterol" is to grab your bad cholesterol, LDL (Low Density Lipoprotein), and take it to the liver where it is broken down and excreted.



Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs) are necessary fats that humans cannot synthesize, and must be obtained through diet. EFAs are long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids derived from linolenic, linoleic, and oleic acids. There are two families of EFAs: Omega-3 and Omega-6. Omega-9 is necessary yet "non-essential" because the body can manufacture it on its own, provided essential EFAs are present.

- Omega-3 fatty acids are derived from Linolenic Acid
- Omega-6 from Linoleic Acid
- Omega-9 from Oleic Acid

Essential fatty acids support the cardiovascular, reproductive, immune, and nervous systems. The human body needs EFAs to manufacture and repair cell membranes, enabling the cells to obtain optimum nutrition and expel harmful waste products. A primary function of EFAs is the production of prostaglandins, which regulate body functions such as heart rate, blood pressure, blood clotting, fertility, conception, and play a role in immune function by regulating inflammation and encouraging the body to fight infection. Essential fatty acids are also needed for proper growth in children, particularly for neural development and maturation of sensory systems, with male children having higher needs than females. Fetuses and breast-fed infants also require an adequate supply of EFAs through the mother's dietary intake.

EFA deficiency and Omega 6/3 imbalance is linked with serious health conditions, such as heart attacks, cancer, insulin resistance, asthma, lupus, schizophrenia, depression, postpartum depression, accelerated aging, stroke, obesity, diabetes, arthritis, ADHD, and Alzheimer's Disease, among others.

Alpha Linolenic Acid (ALA) is the principal Omega-3 fatty acid, which a healthy human will convert into eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), and later into docosahexaenoic acid (DHA). EPA and the GLA synthesized from linoleic (Omega-6) acid are later converted

into hormone-like compounds known as eicosanoids, which aid in many bodily functions including vital organ function and intracellular activity.

Omega-3s are used in the formation of cell walls, making them supple and flexible, and improving circulation and oxygen uptake with proper red blood cell flexibility and function. Omega-3 deficiencies are linked to decreased memory and mental abilities, tingling sensation of the nerves, poor vision, increased tendency to form blood clots, diminished immune function, increased triglycerides and "bad" cholesterol (LDL) levels, impaired membrane function, hypertension, irregular heart beat, learning disorders, menopausal discomfort, itchiness on the front of the lower leg(s), and growth retardation in infants, children, and pregnant women.

Linoleic Acid is the primary Omega-6 fatty acid. A healthy human with good nutrition will convert linoleic acid into gamma linolenic acid (GLA), which will later be synthesized, with EPA from the Omega-3 group, into eicosanoids. Some Omega-6s improve diabetic neuropathy, rheumatoid arthritis, PMS, skin disorders (e.g. psoriasis and eczema), and aid in cancer treatment. Linoleic acid often is not converted to GLA because of metabolic problems caused by diets rich in sugar, alcohol, or trans fats from processed foods, as well as smoking, pollution, stress, aging, viral infections, and other illnesses such as diabetes.

Black currant seed oil is derived from black currants (*ribes nigrum*), that are native to northern parts of Europe and Asia. Black currant seed oil is very rich in essential fatty acids, especially omega 6 and omega 3 essential fatty acids. Along with these, black currant seed oil is also rich with alpha-linoleic acid, Gamma-linolenic acid and stearidonic acids as well.

Regular consumption of black currant seed oil has proved to decrease the atherosclerotic lesions (vessel wall thrombus formation). Black currant seed oil benefits can significantly reduce platelet aggregation, reducing blood clotting, controlling blood pressure levels, reducing cholesterol levels and maintaining the overall heart health.

Black currant seed oil is rich with omega 6 fatty acids that prevent premature aging. Alpha-linoleic acid and gamma-linolenic acids that are present in black currant seed oil benefit in healing scars, repairing damaged tissues, reduce premature wrinkle formation, maintaining healthy skin and reducing skin problems like dry and damaged skin.

Black currant oil has immense medicinal value. It generally is considered safe to use.

Black currant oil benefits: **Cancer prevention** - The anthocyanins found in black currant oil may help prevent cancer by reducing inflammation and stabilizing the free oxygen radicals formed as a result of various metabolic processes in the body, according to A. Bishayee, author of a study published in the January 2011 edition of the Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry. If the free radicals are not stabilized, they may interact with DNA and proteins of the human cells and bring about irreversible changes, leading to cancer.

**Cardioprotective** - Another study published in the June 2010 edition of the "Phytotherapy Research" stated that black currant oil supplements can decrease the triglyceride and total cholesterol levels and increase the levels of good cholesterol or HDL in patients with mild hyperlipidemia or increased lipid levels in the blood. This may prevent plaque formation and reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke. Rheumatoid Arthritis - Black currant oil may be beneficial to rheumatoid arthritis patients, says John Klippel in the book "Primer on Rheumatic Diseases." This may be because of the presence of gamma-linolenic acid, which constitutes 15 to 20 percent of black currant oil

and has the ability to reduce the inflammation of joints associated with rheumatoid arthritis.

**Vision** - Anthocyanins in black currant may improve vision by lowering the dark adaptation threshold. They also promote the regeneration of rhodopsin and help relax the eye muscles in test animals.

**Infections** - According to the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine, black currant oil may promote proper functioning of the immune system by enhancing the cell-mediated immune response. Black currant extracts, according to Drugs.com, also inhibit the growth certain gram-negative bacteria and influenza viruses in vitro.

**Women's health** - Anti-inflammatory prostaglandins lessen the effects of premenstrual cramps and breast tenderness. GLA is also shown to reduce and in some cases alleviate the symptoms of depression in menstruating women. In some women, taking black currant oil reduced the incidence of hot flashes and night sweats due to menopause.



Be sure to try NSP's Black Currant Oil (90 softgel caps) or Super GLA Oil Blend (90 softgel caps).

## References:

<http://apssm2009.com/black-currant-seed-oil-rewards>  
<http://goodfats.pamrotella.com>  
[http://www.livestrong.com/article/393884-black-currant-oil-benefits/?utm\\_source=popup&utm\\_medium=1](http://www.livestrong.com/article/393884-black-currant-oil-benefits/?utm_source=popup&utm_medium=1)

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**Yours in Good Health!**

Sincerely,

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