



# *Flax Seed*

*Contains: omega-3's and omega-6's & Lignans. Acne, eczema, psoriasis, sunburn, rosacea, menopausal symptoms, vaginal dryness, menstrual cramps, female infertility, endometriosis, cancer, immune enhancer, lower cholesterol, heart disease, inflammation, gout, lupus.*

**Information:** Herbals/Nutritionals/Medicinals can be very strong, consequently, if each one is not tailored to your specific needs, then you can risk more harm than good. This information is meant to be used by your VHC Medical Team and personal Physician as they build your Total Health Plan. Never attempt to adjust your prescribed medications and/or Natural Treatments without your physician's and Medical Team's knowledge and guidance. Since herbals/nutritionals and medications can interact with each other, it is always advisable to consult with your health care provider and The Vibrant Health Community at [www.VibrantHealthCommunity.com](http://www.VibrantHealthCommunity.com) (or call 1-866-378-8253) *before* starting/changing your program.

*Official Latin Name:* Linum usitatissimum

*Botanical name:* Linum usitatissimum.

*Family:* Linaceae

*Parts used:* ripe seeds and their expressed oil

*Meaning of literature:* The species name "usitatissimum" means "most useful".

*Synonyms:* Flaxseed, common flax, lint bells, winterlien, Chih-ma, Common Flax, Flax, Flax Seed, Flax Weed, Linseed, Lint Bells, Toad Flax, Uma, flaxseed kernel, linseed kernel.

*Other Possible Synonyms:* L. crepitans[G] L. humile[B,G,P] L. usitatissimum subsp. transitorium[G] L. usitatissimum var. humile[B,G,P]

*Common Names:* Flax, Golden Flax, Ama, Annual Flax, Chih Ma, Lini semen, flaxseed, Common Flax, Cultivated Flax, Hu Ma, Kahtan, Keten, Kettan, Kittan, Lin, Linaza, Lino, Linseed, Linseed Flax, Linum usitatissimum

Flax oil in the seed contains 4% L-glutamic acid, which is used to treat mental deficiencies in adults. It also has soothing and lubricating properties, and is used in medicines to soothe tonsillitis, sore throats, coughs, colds, constipation, gravel and stones. Flaxseed is largely employed as an addition to cough

medicines. As a domestic remedy for colds, coughs and irritation of the urinary organs, Flaxseed tea is most valuable. A little honey and lemon juice makes it very agreeable and more efficacious. This demulcent infusion contains a large quantity of mucilage, and is made from 1 ounce of the ground or entire seeds to 1 pint of

boiling water. It is taken in wineglassful doses, which may be repeated ad libitum.

Flaxseed contains omega-6 and omega-9 essential fatty acids, linolenic, linoleni & oleic acids, linamarin (a cyanogenic glycoside), mucilage, cyanogenic glycosides, B vitamins, fiber, protein, potassium, lecithin, magnesium, zinc, and vitamins A and E.

Nutritional experts have identified lignans, fiber and Omega-3 fatty acids, as the nutrients in flaxseed that appear to have substantial health benefits.

Natural ALA, Omega-3 source (Omega-3 EFAs): Flaxseed is an important richest source of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), a plant source of omega-3 series of essential fatty acids. Flaxseed is one of the richest sources of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), the main compound of valuable omega-3 fatty acids.

Rich source of ALA (alpha-linolenic acid): ALA is the precursor to eicosapentaenoic acid and the Series 3 prostaglandins (PGE3), which are critical hormones regulating cellular activity. Flaxseed is by far the richest source of alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), the parent compound of the omega-3 fatty acids. In comparison, fish contain only trace amounts of ALA and fish oil can adversely affect the taste and odor of food products. Omega-3 is an essential fatty acid because it cannot be synthesized by the body. Research indicates that ALA improves immunity, the body's ability to defend itself against foreign substances. Studies have also shown that alpha-linolenic acid may lower the risk of stroke and other cardiovascular diseases. Both the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization recommend an increased daily intake of omega-3 fatty acids.

Rich source of Omega-3 EFAs (Omega-3; Omega-3 Essential Fatty Acids): The omega-3's are one of two families of essential fatty acids, which are necessary for growth and development and cannot be made by the body. Omega-3's are the building blocks of eicosanoids, hormonelike compounds that regulate blood pressure, clotting, and other body

functions.

The body does not naturally produce certain essential fatty acids, so it is necessary to receive them via the diet. Flaxseed supplements the body with these fatty acids, which are vital for maintaining body temperature, building nerve insulation, protecting tissues and producing energy. Fatty acids are important for building prostaglandins, which are necessary for several body processes, including dilation of blood vessels, cholesterol metabolization, and other critical bio-chemical functions.

Prostaglandins are essential hormone-like substances that help regulate systems functions, including immune, reproductive, cardiovascular and nervous systems. Several scientific studies show that consumption of sources of omega-3 oils leads to a substantially lower risk of death from coronary heart disease. Until recently, experts believed the best sources of omega-3 were fish oils.

However, Flaxseed contains twice to three times as much omega-3 essential fatty acids as fish oil products, without the fishy aftertaste. The common name Flax also includes the species *Linum lewisii* and *Linum perenne*, which are used interchangeably with *Linum usitatissimum*.

Numerous studies have shown that omega-3 fatty acids help lower cholesterol and blood triglycerides, and help prevent clots in arteries which may result in strokes, heart attacks and thromboses. Other fatty acids, omega-6's, are abundant in vegetable oils such as corn, soybean, safflower, and sunflower oils as well as in the many processed foods made from these oils. They're also available in the meat from grain-fed livestock.

The discoveries about omega-3's and omega-6's are relevant to flaxseed as well as to fish oil. Our bodies function best when our diets contain a well-balanced ratio of these fatty acids, meaning no more than 4 times as much omega-6 as omega-3. But we typically eat 10 to 30 times more omega-6's than omega-3's, which is a prescription for trouble, says Artemis Simopoulos, M.D., president of the Center for

Genetics, Nutrition, and Health in Washington, D.C., and author of *The Omega Plan*. This imbalance puts us at greater risk for a number of serious illnesses, including heart disease, cancer, stroke, and arthritis, he says.

As we've noted, an excess of omega-6 fatty acids, when not checked by a complementary amount of omega-3's, can lead to the overproduction of potentially inflammatory biochemicals called prostaglandins and leukotrienes.

A deficiency of omega-3's is linked to various skin disorders, arthritis and joint stiffness, irritable bowel syndrome, premenstrual syndrome, immune dysfunction, and depression, says Michael Janson, M.D., president of the American College for Advancement in Medicine, based in Laguna Hills, California, and author of *The Vitamin Revolution in Health Care*. As the most abundant plant source of omega-3 fatty acids, flaxseed helps restore balance and lets omega-3's do what they're best at: balancing the immune system, decreasing inflammation, and lowering some of the risk factors for heart disease.

Rich source of lignans and the functions of flaxseed lignans: Flaxseeds are the most abundant source of lignans. Lignans are a type of insoluble fiber that act as phytoestrogens that have shown to help relieve the symptoms of menopause, as well as having anticancer, antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral properties. It is the anticancer effects of lignans that have received the most research attention lately.

Flaxseeds are the most abundant source of compounds which can be converted by bacteria in the gut to lignans, special compounds which are demonstrating some rather impressive health benefits. The benefits include positive effects in relieving menopausal hot flashes, as well as anti-cancer, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal and anti-viral activity.

Lignans are plant-based compounds that can block estrogen activity in cells, reducing the risk of certain cancers. Many plants have some

lignans, but flaxseed has at least 75 times more than almost any other plant.

Lignans are phytoestrogens, meaning that they are similar to but weaker than the estrogen that a woman's body produces naturally. Therefore, they may also help alleviate menopausal discomforts such as hot flashes and vaginal dryness. They are also antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral.

Internal uses of flaxseed: Chronic constipation, for colons damaged by abuse of laxatives, irritable colon, diverticulitis, as mucilage for gastritis and enteritis.

External uses of flaxseed: As cataplasm for local inflammation.

**Actions and Indications of Flaxseed:** Antitussive, gentle bulk laxative, emollient, anodyne, resolvent, relaxing expectorant, antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, locally drawing, soothing and healing, antitussive, pectoral

**Indications:** Respiratory catarrh, bronchitis, furunculosis, pleuritic pains .

**Flaxseed Oil Benefits:** Lower cholesterol, protect against heart disease and control high blood pressure. Several studies indicate that flaxseed oil, as well as ground flaxseeds, can lower cholesterol, thereby significantly reducing the risk of heart disease. Taking flaxseed oil may also protect against angina (chest pain) and high blood pressure. In addition, a five-year study done recently at Boston's Simmons College found that flaxseed oil may be useful in preventing a second heart attack. It may also help prevent elevated blood pressure by inhibiting inflammatory reactions that cause artery-hardening plaque and poor circulation.

Counter inflammation associated with gout, lupus and fibrocystic breasts: Omega-3 fatty acids appear to limit the inflammatory reaction associated with these conditions. In cases of lupus, flaxseed oil not only reduces inflammation in the joints, skin and kidneys, but also lowers cholesterol levels that may be elevated by the

disease. Taking flaxseed oil for gout may lessen the often sudden and severe joint pain or swelling that is a symptom of this condition. In addition, the ability of omega-3 fatty acids to boost the absorption of iodine--a mineral often found in low levels in women suffering from fibrocystic breasts--makes flaxseed oil potentially valuable for treating this often painful condition.

Control constipation, hemorrhoids, diverticular disorders and gallstones: Because they are high in dietary fibre, ground flaxseeds can help ease the passage of stools and thus relieve constipation, hemorrhoids and diverticular disease. In those with diverticular disease, flaxseeds may also keep intestinal pouches free of waste and thus keep potential infection at bay. Taken for inflammatory bowel disease, flaxseed oil can help to calm inflammation and repair any intestinal tract damage. In addition, the oil may prevent painful gallstones from developing and even dissolve existing stones.

Treat acne, eczema, psoriasis, sunburn and rosacea. The essential fatty acids in flaxseed oil are largely responsible for its skin-healing powers. Red, itchy patches of eczema, psoriasis and rosacea often respond to the EFA's anti-inflammatory actions and overall skin-soothing properties. Sunburned skin may heal faster when treated with the oil as well. In cases of acne, the EFAs encourage thinning of the oily sebum that clogs pores.

Promote healthy hair and nails: The abundant omega-3 fatty acids in flaxseed oil have been shown to contribute to healthy hair growth (in fact, low levels of these acids may cause dry and lackluster locks). Hair problems exacerbated by psoriasis or eczema of the scalp may respond to the skin-revitalizing and anti-inflammatory actions of flaxseed oil as well. Similarly, the oil's EFAs work to nourish dry or brittle nails, stopping them from cracking or splitting.

Minimize nerve damage that causes numbness and tingling as well as other disorders: The EFAs in flaxseed oil assist in the transmission of nerve impulses, making the oil potentially

valuable in treating conditions of numbness and tingling. The oil's nerve-nourishing actions may also help in the treatment of Parkinson's disease, a degenerative disorder of the nervous system, and protect against the nerve damage associated with diabetes and multiple sclerosis.

Reduce cancer risk and guard against the effects of ageing: The lignans in flaxseed oil appear to play a role in protecting against breast, colon, prostate, and perhaps skin cancer. Although further studies are needed, research undertaken at the University of Toronto indicates that women with breast cancer, regardless of the degree of cancer invasiveness, may benefit from treatment with flaxseed oil. Interestingly, the oil's lignans may protect against various effects of ageing as well.

Treat menopausal symptoms, menstrual cramps, female infertility and endometriosis: Because the hormone-balancing lignans and plant estrogens (phytoestrogens) in flaxseed oil help stabilize a woman's estrogen-progesterone ratio, they can have beneficial effects on the menstrual cycle, and relieve the hot flashes of perimenopausal and menopause. Flaxseed oil may also improve uterine function and thus treat fertility problems. In addition, the essential fatty acids in flaxseed oil have been shown to block production of prostaglandins, hormonelike substances that, when released in excess amounts during menstruation, can cause the heavy bleeding associated with endometriosis.

Fight prostate problems, male infertility and impotence: The EFAs in flaxseed oil may help to prevent swelling and inflammation of the prostate, the small gland located below the bladder in males that tends to enlarge with age. Symptoms of such enlargement, such as urgency to urinate, may lessen as a result. The EFAs also play a role in keeping sperm healthy, which may be of value in treating male infertility, and they can improve blood flow to the penis, a boon for those suffering from impotence.

Nutrition Facts of flaxseed: Why Use Flax Seed: Chances are you are not getting enough valuable fiber or Omega 3's in your diet.

Omega 3 is found in cold water fish, like salmon, although you would need to eat almost 3 pounds of salmon to equal only 50 grams of flaxseed!

So unless you are eating salmon every night for dinner you are probably not getting enough Omega 3 in you diet.

Heart-Healing Omega 3's		Cleansing Fiber		Immune Enhancing Lignans
Source	Omega 3	Source (1-cup)	Grams	
Golden Flax	48%	Flaxseed	10 grams	Just 1/4 cup of flaxseed contains as many lignans as: 90 lbs. of cabbage 82 lbs. of bananas 75 lbs. of strawberries 26 lbs. of broccoli 12 lbs. of wheat Nothing else can do this!
Soybeans	7%	40% bran flakes	6.4 grams	
Pumpkin	15%	Total cereal	2.5 grams	
Walnut	5%	Pasta	1.6 grams	
Safflower	0%	Black Beans	7.2 grams	
Sunflower	0%	Raspberries	9 grams	
Corn	0%	Kiwi	3.1 grams	
		Corn	7.8 grams	

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