



Super GLA

Stock #1844-5 (90 capsules)

GLA (gamma-linolenic acid) is an omega-6 essential fatty acid. The body requires essential fatty acids to produce various hormone-like chemicals called prostaglandins, which operate in most tissues of the body to regulate critical bodily functions, including healing, inflammatory processes, thermoregulation (body temperature), as well as cardiovascular, digestive, immune, kidney, nervous and reproductive system functions.¹⁻³

A review of several clinical studies suggests that therapeutic doses of GLA may be effective for treating inflammatory disorders, such as rheumatoid arthritis (RA)—an immune system disorder that affects the joints. The immune system's lymphocytes attack synovial membranes lining the joints, causing synovial cells to swell and release substances that cause pain within the joint and compromise joint function. GLA treatment is associated with clinical improvement in patients with RA, as evaluated by duration of morning stiffness, joint pain/swelling, and ability to reduce other medications, which is especially important since RA patients are at high risk for developing gastrointestinal complications caused by

non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) and corticosteroid medications.^{1,4-7}

GLA is also widely used in Europe to treat diabetic neuropathy (a complication of diabetes involving pain and/or numbness due to progressive nerve damage) and eczema (an inflammatory skin disease producing dry, reddish, itching and/or weeping patches of skin). Physicians in both Europe and the U.S. use GLA to treat cyclic mastalgia (a condition involving breast pain associated with the menstrual cycle). GLA has also been suggested as a treatment for allergies, asthma, benign prostatic hyperplasia (prostate enlargement), irritable bowel syndrome, Raynaud's phenomenon (exaggerated sensitivity of the hands and fingers to cold), as well as heart disease—data from a highly relevant animal study indicates that dietary GLA can retard the development of atherosclerosis (narrowing of arteries caused by the buildup of fatty plaque on vessel walls). Furthermore, GLA demonstrates the potential to suppress tumor growth and metastasis.^{1,2,7}

Since very little GLA is found in the diet, the body is designed to make its own GLA from linoleic acid (LA), an essential fatty acid present in many foods. However, numerous factors can disrupt the body's ability to convert LA into GLA, including advanced age, elevated cholesterol levels, diabetes, eczema, high alcohol intake, chronic stress, viral infections, and the lack of certain nutrients in the diet (i.e. vitamin B₆, biotin, calcium, magnesium, zinc). Poor diet can also disrupt GLA production—if the diet is high in saturated fats (animal fat, butter, margarine and other hydrogenated fats) and low in oils, GLA formation will be bypassed. Fortunately, GLA supplements can be used to avoid a deficiency. Borage oil is the richest supplemental source of GLA, followed by black currant oil, then evening primrose oil.^{1,2,7,8}

Borage oil (21% GLA) - Borage oil is rich in GLA, which has been shown to suppress joint pain/swelling in patients with RA. GLA is converted to DGLA, the immediate precursor of prostaglandin E₁ (which exerts potent anti-inflammatory activity). In addition, GLA (in borage oil) has also been shown to reduce T-lymphocyte proliferation, which promotes joint tissue injury in RA. Borage oil may even prove beneficial against heart disease—a randomized, controlled clinical trial showed that borage oil reduced the cardiovascular effects of stress by decreasing systolic blood pressure and heart rate in response to acute stress.^{7,9,10}

Black currant oil (13% GLA) - GLA-rich black currant oil has been shown to be a potentially effective treatment for RA. A 24-week double-blind, placebo-controlled trial demonstrated a reduction in the signs and symptoms of disease activity in rheumatoid arthritis (RA) patients receiving black currant oil. In contrast, patients given a placebo showed no changes in disease. Black currant oil has also been studied to determine the influence of GLA-rich preparations on cardiovascular function. An 8-week study on resting blood pressure and cardiovascular reactivity to psychological stress in borderline hypertensive (high blood pressure) individuals was conducted. Study results showed black currant oil inhibited blood pressure reactivity by over 40%; a decrease in diastolic blood pressure was also significantly different, in contrast to the "slight" changes observed in the placebo group. Plus, animal research indicates that GLA from black currant oil-rich diets inhibits platelet adhesion to blood vessel walls and the development of blood clots. Furthermore, black currant oil has been shown to improve immune response in healthy elderly subjects. Black currant oil exhibits a moderate immune-enhancing effect, which is attributed to GLA's ability to suppress prostaglandin E₂(PGE₂) production—immunologic vigor has been shown to decline with age due to the increased production of PGE₂, a well-known suppressor of T cell-mediated immune function.¹¹⁻¹⁴

Evening primrose oil (9% GLA) - Scientific research clearly demonstrates the significant health benefits of evening primrose oil in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis (RA), eczema, cyclic mastalgia, heart disease, and more. For

example, a 12-month double-blind, placebo-controlled study of 16 patients with RA showed significant subjective improvement from evening primrose oil. Plus, patients treated with evening primrose oil significantly reduced their use of NSAIDs. Evening primrose oil has also demonstrated beneficial effects against the complications of diabetes. A clinical trial of over 100 patients showed that evening primrose oil improved symptoms of diabetic neuropathy (i.e. numbness and pain) and appeared to reverse prior nerve damage. In addition, a meta-analysis of 9 randomized, placebo-controlled trials on the effects of evening primrose oil for the treatment of eczema showed a highly significant difference between treatment and placebo groups, particularly with regard to the symptom of itching. Furthermore, evening primrose oil has become a standard treatment for cyclic mastalgia (fibrocystic breast disease). Women suffering from this condition experience breast pain during the week or two prior to menstruation, often accompanied by inflammation, swelling and sometimes actual cysts forming in the breasts. Researchers theorize that the cause of cyclic mastalgia is associated with an imbalance in essential fatty acids. A recent study involving 34 women with persistently disturbing mastalgia found that evening primrose oil provided an overall clinically useful response rate of 97% after 6 months—researchers concluded that evening primrose oil may be recommended as a first-line specific treatment for cyclic mastalgia. Likewise, a review of over 400 women receiving treatment for mastalgia found that evening primrose oil demonstrated equivalent efficacy as the prescription drug *danazol*, with many fewer adverse events reported. Evening primrose oil owes its therapeutic effects to the GLA content of the oil.^{1,2,15-18}

Each capsule of Super GLA provides a total of 130mg of GLA (gamma-linolenic acid).

References:

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