



DENES EVENING PRIMROSE OIL

FACT SHEET 25

A GUIDE TO DENES EVENING PRIMROSE OIL CAPSULES

Evening Primrose Oil (EPO) is widely used as a human health supplement. It is also being used increasingly to help with some common pet problems. Skin conditions, particularly allergies in both cats and dogs, often respond well to treatment with EPO.

WHAT DOES EPO CONTAIN?

Evening Primrose Oil contains a group of polyunsaturated fats known as essential fatty acids, or EFAs for short. EFAs are important for general health and particularly for the growth of new cells. They form part of the structure of cell walls and are also involved in the manufacture of a variety of other substances needed by the body. This includes a class of compounds known as eicosanoids which are involved with the modulation of inflammation. Unfortunately, the body cannot make EFAs so these must be provided by the diet. Besides EPO, other well-known sources of EFAs include Starflower oil, Borage oil and Blackcurrant oil.

A deficiency of EFAs can result from a poor diet, particularly those which are low in fat. This is often reflected in the state of the skin and coat. Animals with digestive problems such as malabsorption and liver disease can also be deficient. Older animals often require more EFAs than others to maintain good health and may show symptoms of deficiency even when maintained on a good diet.

Well known EFAs include:

- Linoleic acid (which helps maintain the skin water permeability barrier)
- Alpha-Linolenic acid (which helps with reducing skin inflammation)
- Arachidonic acid (which controls the proliferation of skin cells)

Some EFAs are converted within the body to other metabolites, including Gamma-Linolenic acid (GLA) which is also found in EPO. If the body cannot make enough GLA, then signs of a deficiency can arise. Again, this can be reflected in the condition of the coat and skin. Older dogs and those with serious health problems cannot convert EFAs to GLA easily. This can lead to additional problems. Cats cannot convert EFAs to GLA at all and must obtain all their GLA from the diet. GLA is known to be useful in managing skin conditions linked with allergies and with under-activity of the thyroid gland (hypothyroidism).

MORE ABOUT EFAs

EFAs are divided into two classes, Omega 6 fatty acids and Omega 3 fatty acids. Much greater significance is now being attributed to the importance of both of these types of fatty acid and the ratio between them.

Omega 6 fatty acids are derived from meat and vegetable sources, whereas Omega 3 fatty acids come from marine sources (fish oils) or plants such as flax seed or hemp seed. Through a series of metabolic pathways, EFAs are converted to substances known as prostaglandins (PGs) which are involved with inflammation. Certain PGs can help reduce inflammation so, consequently, EFAs can play an important role in limiting inflammatory reactions, including those with an allergic basis.

HOW DENES EVENING PRIMROSE OIL CAN HELP

Not surprisingly, the benefits of EFAs have been well researched. EFAs have been found to help with allergy-based skin problems, limiting the degree of itching and scratching. Secondary conditions such as dermatitis, seborrhoea and skin infections also appear to benefit. In addition EFAs can be used as supportive treatment for a variety of other common conditions. These include heart disease, arthritis, cancer, immune system problems and kidney disease.

USING EPO

Denes EPO can be used in the management of common skin problems such as:

- Allergy-based conditions, such as flea allergy dermatitis
- General itching, licking and scratching
- Seborrhoea (greasy skin)
- Poor coat and skin
- Hair loss, dull coat and matting
- Dry and flaky skin
- Thickened or pigmented skin
- Excessive moulting

EPO is also useful as a supplement in cases of

- Arthritis
- Kidney disease
- General ill health
- Conditions where the immune system has been weakened.

Denes Evening Primrose Oil Capsules are available in tubs of 40 and 80 capsules. The suggested dose is 1 capsule per 10kg body weight daily. The benefits are often slow to appear and it may take several weeks before you can see any change. For skin problems Denes EPO capsules can be combined with using Denes:

- Greenleaf Tablets
- Garlic Tablets
- All in One Tablets
- Skin Balm
- Hot Itch Lotion
- Essential Oil Shampoo

Please note:

Evening Primrose Oil should not be given to epileptic patients as it can increase the risk of fits occurring.

Other useful Denes fact sheets to read

- Fleas and your pet
- Allergies

If you have any queries concerning your pet's health or feeding problems, you can contact us for free pet care advice by:

- Visiting our website www.denes.com
- Emailing us at info@denes.com
- Calling us on **01273 325364** Mon-Fri, 9am – 12Noon
- Writing to us at:
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