

Evening primrose oil (EPO) :*Oenothera biennis*

EVENING PRIMROSE OIL: THE EMOLLIENT OF THE ROYALS

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IN ESSENCE

- Evening Primrose Oil is cold-pressed from the seeds of the *Oenothera biennis* botanical.
- Evening Primrose Oil has traditionally been referred to as the 'King's Cure-All' due to the belief that its 'majestic' benefits and 'honorable' properties made it fit for Kings and Queen's to apply medicinally.
- Used cosmetically or topically, Evening Primrose Oil soothes and moisturizes the skin, scalp, and hair while enhancing elasticity. Furthermore, it promotes a healthy, clear, rejuvenated complexion with enhanced radiance and addresses roughness, wrinkles, redness, dryness, and irritation. It facilitates the healing process, reduces the appearance of scars, and calms inflammation.
- Used medicinally, Evening Primrose Oil is reputed to ease headaches, dizziness, muscular aches and weakness, tiredness and slowed reflexes, and irritability. It is believed to promote clear-headedness, decisiveness, and concentration while improving coordination, appetite, immunity, memory, sensuality, and vigor

HISTORY OF EVENING PRIMROSE OIL USAGE

Known to be regal and noble enough for Kings and Queen's to use in medicinal applications, Evening Primrose is famously referred to as the 'King's Cure-All.' Historically, various parts of the Evening Primrose botanical – such as its seeds, fresh flowers, leaves, and roots – as well as its essential fatty acid were used in medicinal applications to address symptoms of acne, asthma, diabetes, eczema, fatigue, loss of libido and impotence, menstruation and menopause, Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome, poor memory, and rheumatism.

In Ayurveda and traditional Chinese medicine, the plant's and its oil's therapeutic properties were revered and used to regulate and address issues associated with circulation, inflammation, the female reproductive system and the respiratory and nervous systems. Among various Native American groups and in communities of early settlers, the plant's various parts were used to make infusions, poultices, and topical pastes intended to address bruises, wounds, and obesity. For some tribes, the plant's roots even made up part of their staple diet. Its benefits were also used to support

nutrition and nourishment as well as to soothe discomforts such as sore throats, stomach aches, gastrointestinal problems, and hemorrhoids.

Since the 17th century, Evening Primrose Oil has gained popularity for its remedial activity and has been used in Europe since then for medicinal purposes. Having become a nutritional supplement, it is also used in culinary applications. In addition to being used to address the aforementioned conditions, since the 1930s the Evening Primrose plant and its essential fatty acid also came to be used for the treatment of conditions such as hair loss, high blood pressure, and osteoporosis. Evening Primrose Oil continues to be used to address symptoms of allergies, poor circulation, and immune deficiencies. This article highlights the various other uses, benefits, therapeutic properties, and safe uses of Evening Primrose Carrier Oil.

EVENING PRIMROSE OIL BENEFITS

The main chemical constituents of Evening Primrose Oil are: **Linoleic Acids (Omega-6)**, **γ-Linolenic Acid (Omega-6)**, **Oleic Acid (Omega-9)**, **Palmitic Acid**, and **Stearic Acid**.

LINOLEIC ACIDS (OMEGA-6) are known to:

- Moisturize hair and promote its growth
- Facilitate wound healing
- Be an effective emulsifier in the formulation of soaps and quick-drying oils
- Exhibit anti-inflammatory properties
- Soothe acne and reduce chances of future outbreaks
- Promote moisture retention in skin and hair
- Make oils feel thinner in consistency when used in an oil blend, thus being beneficial for use on acne-prone skin
- Help slow the look of aging by sustaining skin elasticity and softness

GAMMA-LINOLENIC ACID (OMEGA-6) is known to:

- Be anti-inflammatory
- Nourish the skin with essential fatty acids
- Support the growth of healthier and stronger skin, hair, and nails
- Effectively soothe pain and discomfort associated with arthritis and symptoms of PMS, including headaches
- Soothe joint pain and ease stiffness to improve flexibility
- Potentially soothe symptoms of allergies
- Encourage healthier brain activity
- Help slow the look of aging by sustaining skin elasticity and softness
- Help sustain the health and function of the cells as well as of the immune, nervous, cardiovascular, and reproductive systems

OLEIC ACIDS (OMEGA-9) are known to:

- Maintain the softness, suppleness, and radiance of skin and hair
- Stimulate the growth of thicker, longer, and stronger hair
- Reduce the appearance of aging, such as premature wrinkles and fine lines
- Eliminate dandruff and thereby support hair growth
- Boost immunity
- Exhibit anti-oxidant properties
- Prevent joint inflammation, stiffness, and pain

PALMITIC ACID is known to:

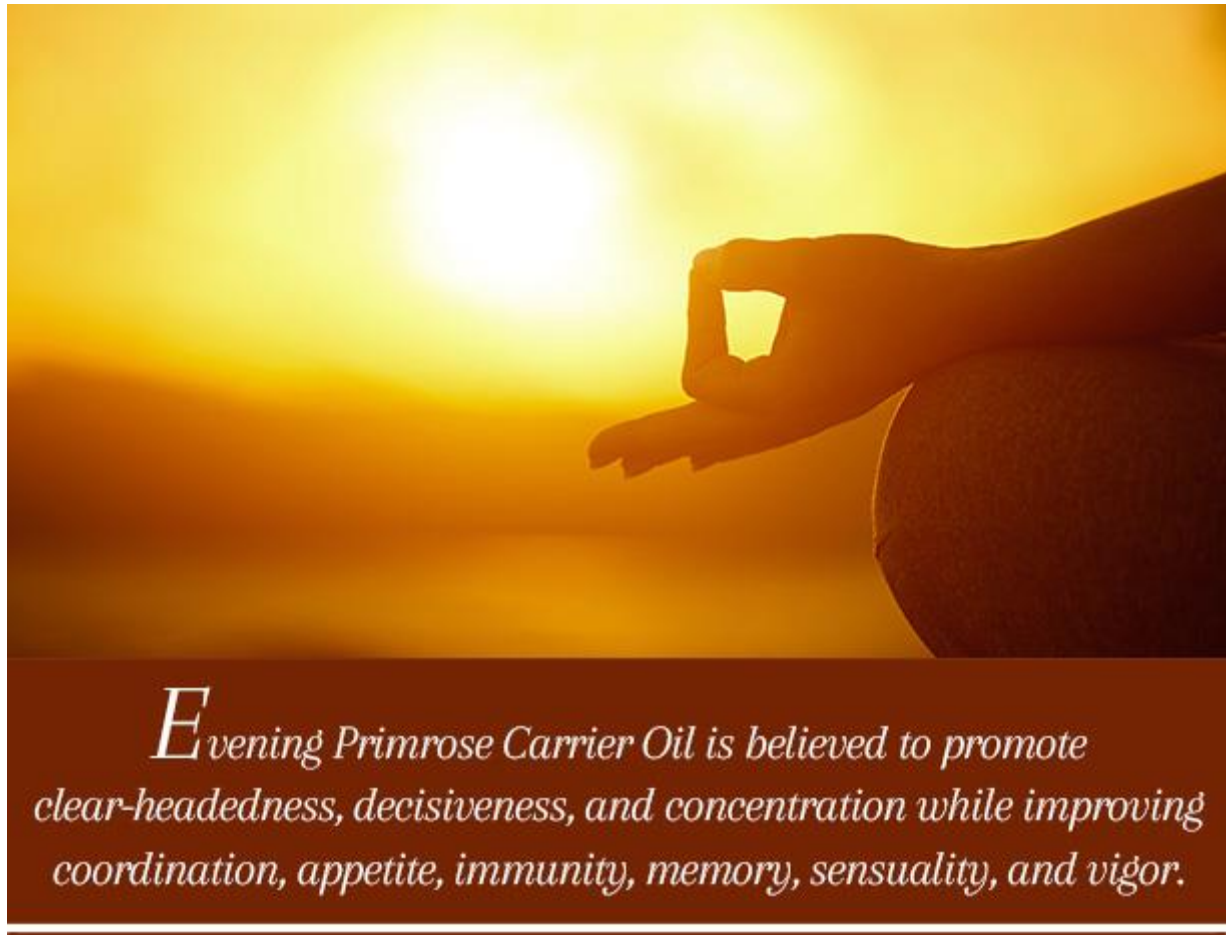
- Have emollient properties
- Soften hair without leaving a greasy or sticky residue
- Be the most common saturated fatty acid

STEARIC ACID is known to:

- Have cleansing properties that eliminate dirt, sweat, and excess sebum from hair and skin
- Be an ideal emulsifying agent that binds water and oil
- Help products remain potent when stored for long periods of time
- Condition and protect hair from damage without diminishing luster or making it feel heavy
- Have exceptional cleansing properties
- Soften skin

Used cosmetically or topically in general, Evening Primrose Carrier Oil exhibits soothing and moisturizing properties, and it is gentle enough for use on sensitive and prematurely aging skin. It is reputed to not only moisturize but to also enhance elasticity as well as the texture of flaking or peeling skin, making it an ideal ingredient in formulations for mature skin. With astringent and softening properties, it promotes the look of a healthy, clear, rejuvenated complexion with enhanced radiance. By addressing roughness, wrinkles, redness, dryness, and irritation, it is reputed to soothe skin afflicted with acne, eczema, and psoriasis. When used in hair, Evening Primrose Carrier Oil is known to hydrate and nourish the scalp to fortify the strands and soothe itchiness, dryness, and inflammation, thus preventing or reducing hair loss.

Used medicinally, Evening Primrose Carrier Oil is reputed to ease headaches, dizziness, muscular aches and weakness, tiredness, and slowed reflexes, and irritability.



Evening Primrose Carrier Oil is believed to promote clear-headedness, decisiveness, and concentration while improving coordination, appetite, immunity, memory, sensuality, and vigor.

As aforementioned, Evening Primrose Oil has traditionally been used to address symptoms of asthma, diabetes, itching disorders, obesity, cough, metabolic and digestive ailments, high blood pressure, and symptoms of menstruation as well as menopause, among other complaints. By facilitating the healing process, it works to reduce the appearance of scars, to soothe inflammation associated with topical allergies, eczema, and psoriasis.

As illustrated, Evening Primrose Carrier Oil is reputed to have many therapeutic properties. The following highlights its many benefits and the kinds of activity it is believed to show:

- **COSMETIC:** Anti-Inflammatory, Anti-Oxidant, Cleansing, Nourishing, Astringent.
- **MEDICINAL:** Anti-Inflammatory, Astringent, Analgesic, Stimulant, Anti-Depressant, Sedative, Expectorant, Anti-Histamine, Anti-Coagulant, Immune-Stimulant, Hormone Regulator, Vulnerary, Antispasmodic, Demulcent, Bronchodilator, Cognition-Enhancing

EVENING PRIMROSE OIL USES

Used in cosmetic and topical applications, Evening Primrose Oil can be applied directly to the skin to hydrate and prevent acne. To reduce the chances of future breakouts, simply dab 2-3 drops of Evening Primrose Carrier Oil onto pimples to facilitate their healing.

Evening Primrose Oil makes an ideal moisturizer that enhances skin health, leaving the complexion looking rejuvenated. For a moisturizer that calms redness, inflammation, and itching, combine Evening Primrose Carrier Oil with equal parts Shea Butter and apply the mixture to the skin nightly before bed. This natural moisturizer is known to nourish the skin with essential fats, thereby soothing and clearing the complexion while promoting its softness.

For a moisturizer blend that is ideal for use on dry and sensitive skin, combine 5 ml (0.16 oz.) Evening Primrose Carrier Oil, 5 ml (0.16 oz.) Jojoba Carrier Oil, and 20 ml (0.70 oz.) of Apricot Kernel Carrier Oil. To this, add 2 drops of Roman Chamomile Essential Oil, 2 drops Neroli Essential Oil, 2 drops Rose Absolute, 5 drops Lavender Essential Oil, and 4 drops Sandalwood Essential Oil. Using the fingertips, massage this blend into the face and neck and leave it on for 20 minutes. Blot any excess oil with a tissue. This moisturizer can be used 3 evenings a week after cleansing the face and neck.

For a calming balm that soothes sore feet and smooths cracked heels, in a small bowl combine 5 ml (0.16 oz.) Evening Primrose Carrier Oil, 5 ml (0.16 oz.) Neem Carrier Oil, 5 ml (0.16 oz.) Avocado Carrier Oil, and 50 ml (1.70 oz.) Aloe Vera Gel. To this mix, add 10 drops of Lavender Essential Oil, 7 drops Tea Tree Essential Oil, 5 drops Benzoin Resinoid, 5 drops Myrrh Essential Oil, and 3 drops Peppermint Essential Oil, then thoroughly combine all the ingredients. This balm can be applied to thoroughly-dried feet after they have been washed in a bath or shower. It is highly recommended that the feet be gently filed first in order to buff away any callouses, as this will prevent the deepening of existing cracks.

For a natural facial oil that is ideal for use on mature skin, simply combine the following ingredients in a small bowl: 12 ml (0.40 oz.) Evening Primrose Carrier Oil, 20 ml (0.70 oz.) Avocado Carrier Oil, 16 ml (0.55 oz.) Rice Bran Carrier Oil, 2 ml (0.10 oz.) Vitamin E Liquid, 4 drops Neroli Essential Oil, and 4 drops Frankincense Oil. Regular application of this moisturizer is known to promote the tightening of skin, which thereby diminishes the appearance of wrinkles and fine lines.

For a formula that can be applied as a nightly facial serum to nourish, soften, and smooth the skin, in a dark glass dropped bottle combine 2 Tbsp. Avocado Carrier Oil, 2 Tbsp. Evening Primrose Carrier Oil, 1 Tbsp. Pomegranate Seed Carrier Oil, and 10 drops of any essential oil that is reputed to have anti-aging effects. Suggested oils include Clary Sage, Frankincense, German Chamomile, Jasmine, Myrrh, Neroli, Patchouli, Sandalwood, or Ylang-Ylang. Next, cleanse the face and pat it dry with a soft, clean cloth. Apply 2-3 drops of this blend to the face and neck each night before bed.

For a hydrating and soothing hair oil treatment, simply massage a tablespoon of Evening Primrose Carrier Oil into the scalp and allow it to soak in for 30 minutes. It can be washed out in the shower as usual with a sulfate-free shampoo, then air-dried. Application of this conditioning hair mask 1-2 times each week is reputed to yield

noticeable results for hair that appears stronger, fuller, healthier, more lustrous, and free from dryness and irritation.

Used in medicinal applications, Evening Primrose Carrier Oil is believed to soothe and prevent acne breakouts. To help lessen the topical discomforts of acne symptoms, combine 1 drop each of Evening Primrose Carrier Oil, Patchouli Essential Oil, and Tea Tree Essential Oil. This blend is known to not only promote general skin health but to also address acne-causing bacteria and reduce the chances of future breakouts.

A GUIDE TO EVENING PRIMROSE OIL VARIETIES & THEIR BENEFITS

EVENING PRIMROSE CARRIER OIL (REFINED)

Botanical Name: *Oenothera biennis*

Method of Extraction and Plant Part: Cold pressed from the seeds

Country of Origin: China

Believed to:

- Be Pale Yellow to Golden Yellow in color
- Have undergone refinement to remove its scent
- Leave skin looking and feeling nourished with its high fatty acid content
- Be ideal for use in manufacturing soaps as well as bath and skincare products
- Be a nourishing, anti-inflammatory emollient for skin/hair that is dry and maturing
- Soothe and diminish the appearance of eczema while slowing the look of aging
- Leave an oily residue on the skin

EVENING PRIMROSE CARRIER OIL (UNREFINED)

Botanical Name: *Oenothera biennis*

Method of Extraction and Plant Part: Cold pressed from the seeds

Country of Origin: China

Believed to:

- Leave skin looking and feeling nourished with its high fatty acid content
- Be Pale Yellow to Golden Yellow in color
- Retain its virgin state after pressing
- Retain a stronger color and aroma than the refined variety, which is natural due to the absence of filtering and chemical processing
- Be ideal for use in manufacturing soaps as well as bath and skincare products
- Be a nourishing emollient for maturing skin and dry hair
- Calm the skin while slowing the look of aging
- Leave an oily residue on the skin

EVENING PRIMROSE ORGANIC CARRIER OIL

Botanical Name: *Oenothera biennis*

Method of Extraction and Plant Part: Cold pressed from the seeds

Country of Origin: China

Believed to:

- Moisturize the skin to promote a revitalized complexion
- Retain most of its nutrients, making it a potent ingredient for use in cosmetics and skincare products
- Range in color from yellowish-Green to Deep Green
- Exude an aroma that is similar to that of Linseed Carrier Oil (also known as Flaxseed Oil)
- Moisturize and nourish skin and hair to enhance their appearance and texture, while reducing the signs of maturation
- Leave an oily residue on the skin
- Be ideal for use in manufacturing organic soaps as well as bath and skincare products that require the use of organic ingredients

CONTRAINDICATIONS FOR EVENING PRIMROSE OIL

As with all other New Directions Aromatics products, Evening Primrose Carrier Oil is for external use only. It is imperative to consult a medical practitioner before using this oil for therapeutic purposes. Pregnant and nursing women are especially advised not to use Evening Primrose Oil without the medical advice of a physician, as it may have an effect on certain hormone secretions and it is unclear whether these effects are transferable to babies at these stages of development. The oil should always be stored in an area that is inaccessible to children, especially those under the age of 7.

Those with the following health conditions are recommended to be advised by a physician: cancer, heart-related ailments, skin disorders, or hormone-related ailments. Individuals that are taking prescription drugs, undergoing major surgery, or who are at a greater risk of experiencing strokes, heart attacks, or atherosclerosis are also advised to seek medical consultation prior to use.

Prior to using Evening Primrose Oil, a skin test is recommended. This can be done by applying a dime-size amount of the oil to a small area of skin that is not sensitive. Evening Primrose Oil must never be used near the eyes, inner nose, and ears, or on any other particularly sensitive areas of skin. Potential side effects of Evening Primrose Oil include itchiness, nausea, headache, abdominal pain, diarrhea, seizures, vomiting, the rapid growth of nails, or bleeding. Those taking anti-coagulant medications may experience excessive bleeding.

Those seeking medical care to manage moods, behaviors, or disorders should treat this Carrier Oil as a complementary remedy rather than a replacement for any medicinal treatments or prescriptions. In the event of an allergic reaction, discontinue use of the

product and see a doctor, pharmacist, or allergist immediately for a health assessment and appropriate remedial action. To prevent side effects, consult with a medical professional prior to use.

Evening primrose is a wildflower that grows throughout the United States. Although Native Americans used the seeds for food and made poultices from the whole plant to heal bruises, evening primrose oil (EPO) has only recently been used as medicine. European settlers took the root back to England and Germany where it was eaten as food.

EPO is found in the plant's seeds, and is high in the essential fatty acid gamma-linolenic acid (GLA). Essential fatty acids, such as omega-6s found in EPO and omega-3s found in fish oil, are used as building blocks for a number of molecules in the body. Your body needs a balance of omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids for good health. GLA is also found in borage oil and black currant oil.

Today, EPO is used to relieve PMS symptoms and some arthritis-related conditions, although scientific evidence to support these uses is lacking. The strongest evidence for EPO use is for treating eczema.

This article focuses on the seed from which EPO is extracted.

Plant Description

A circle of leaves grows close to the ground around evening primrose stems after the first year it is planted. Flowers bloom after sunset, June through September, or on overcast days during the second year. The leaves grow on both sides of the stem at alternating levels.

What is it Made of?

Oil is extracted from the seeds and prepared as medicine using a chemical called hexane. The seeds contain up to 25% essential fatty acids, including linoleic acid (LA) and gamma-linolenic acid (GLA). Both LA and GLA are omega-6 fatty acids. The body needs a balance of omega-6s and omega-3s (found in fish oil) to stay healthy. Most North Americans get too much omega-6 fatty acids in their diet. However, there are different types of omega-6 fatty acids. Some are healthier than others, such as those found in EPO.

Other sources of GLA include spirulina (a blue-green algae), borage, hemp, and black currant oils.

Medicinal Uses and Indications

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