



## Nutri Patient Information Guide # 11

### PMS & Starflower Oil

If you are one of the many women who suffer from the monthly nightmare of premenstrual syndrome or PMS, you may well find salvation in taking a nutritional approach. Borage or Star Flower Oil is extracted from the blue star shaped borage flower. The main ingredient is an essential fatty acid Gamma Linolenic Acid or GLA. Borage oil is now thought to be a very superior source of GLA. Star Flower Oil contains 22% GLA. This is far higher than the amount of GLA found in Evening Primrose Oil.

#### **Faulty Metabolism?**

GLA is converted in the body from linoleic acid. Most Europeans have very high intakes of linoleic acid (Omega-6) which comes from safflower, sunflower and corn oils. Despite this, many people lack the ability to convert linoleic acid into GLA. Research suggests that diets high in hydrogenated and saturated fats, such as those that contain large amounts of fatty convenience foods, and the lack of certain essential nutrients are factors involved in this faulty metabolism. Diets high in saturated fats also compromise the action of GLA.

#### **Prostaglandins and the Kidneys**

One of the primary causes of PMS is thought to be due to a prostaglandin imbalance. Prostaglandins are hormone like substances manufactured in the body that have many different actions. Some stimulate pain and inflammation, regulating the size of blood vessels and influencing the amount of water excreted by the kidneys. The prostaglandins can therefore influence blood pressure, cause headaches and give rise to menstrual cramping. Other prostaglandins are anti-inflammatory and help with reducing pain and inflammation.

#### **Mood Swings**

The building blocks of the anti-inflammatory prostaglandins are the essential fatty acids. If a woman's diet is deficient in essential fatty acids, then prostaglandin balance will be upset and PMS symptoms may occur. By supplementing with Star Flower Oil many women have found the symptoms of breast tenderness, mood swings and water retention to be relieved.

#### **Health Maintenance**

Research has shown that GLA plays many essential roles in the maintenance of health when it is further converted into prostaglandins. These prostaglandins orchestrate a whole host of essential biochemical activities. GLA may help to lower high blood pressure. It does this in several ways. It increases the pliancy of artery walls, reduces the tendency of blood cells to clot and helps to form high density lipoproteins (HDL) which reduce plasma cholesterol. GLA may also help reduce the amount of insulin required by diabetics in order to regulate blood sugar levels. This can reduce the stress on the liver and pancreas.

### **Depression and PMS**

Breast feeding mothers may benefit from supplementing their diets with GLA as human breast milk is a very rich source of GLA and considerable loss of GLA occurs from the mother's body when she breast feeds. This may be one reason why successive pregnancies may increase the risk of post partum depression and PMS.

### **May be Rubbed In**

GLA poses no problems with side effects. There may be slight nausea but if taken with food this does not seem to be a problem. If the nausea does persist the capsules may be broken and rubbed into the skin where it will be rapidly absorbed. GLA has a softening effect on the stool and may therefore be helpful in relieving constipation, a problem for many women who are sufferers of PMS.

### **Joint Lubrication**

Sufferers of rheumatic and arthritic disorders may also be helped with GLA. Supplementation is extremely successful in reducing pain and inflammation around the joints. GLA also provides pliancy to the synovial capsules and therefore maintains good lubrication of the joints.

### **Other nutritional approaches to help with PMS.**

As well as using Star Flower Oil, many women find relief from PMS from other important nutrients.

### **B Vitamins**

Vitamin B6 is very helpful in reducing many of the symptoms of PMS such as bloating, breast tenderness, mood swings and headaches. On top of this a B complex formula may also prove beneficial, as these vitamins play important roles in ensuring Star Flower Oil is converted to the anti-inflammatory prostaglandins.

### **Liver Detoxification**

Many sufferers of PMS find that it is due to their liver being unable to detoxify an excess of hormones that causes problems. By supporting the liver in its detoxification role, these excess hormones can be more easily eliminated and some of the symptoms associated with PMS can be eradicated. Speak to your health care professional about how a liver detox programme, coupled with supplementary Star Flower Oil and the essential B vitamins, could soon make your PMS a thing of the past.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this information guide. If you wish to order any of the supplements mentioned, please contact your healthcare practitioner who can prescribe Nutri products specific to your personal requirements.**

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