EVENING PRIMROSE OIL

WHAT IS IT?

EPO is from the seed of the evening primrose plant and contains an omega-6 essential fatty acid called gamma-linolenic acid (GLA) which is believed to be its active ingredient.

WHAT IS IT USED FOR?

Hot flashes (possibly ineffective)
Breast pain
PMS
Eczema
High Cholesterol
Osteoporosis
Diabetic Neuropathy

RESEARCH/STUDIES

• There is mixed data on the effects of EPO on breast cancer cells
• Studies combining EPO and Tamoxifen for the treatment of breast cancer have shown quicker tumor response to the Tamoxifen.
• One clinical trial found that EPO was not any better than a placebo in relieving hot flashes.
• Some studies indicate EPO may decrease the risk of seizures, other studies show it may increase the risk of seizures, especially in patients with schizophrenia on phenothiazines.

IS IT SAFE?

• EPO is likely safe when used orally in recommended doses for up to one year.
• Long term safety information greater than 1 year is not available.

SIDE EFFECTS, WARNINGS AND PRECAUTIONS

Generally well tolerated; other side effects include:

Headache
Low Blood pressure
Nausea
Bloating
Gas
Seizures
Increased bowel movements (diarrhea)
Skin Rash
Stomach pain

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- EPO does not appear to affect menopausal symptoms but more studies are needed
- EPO may enhance the effects of Tamoxifen.