

## **ABOUT FLAXSEED OR FLAXSEED OIL**

Compiled by Charles (Chuck) Maack – Prostate Cancer Advocate/Activist

Disclaimer: Please recognize that I am not a Medical Doctor. I have been an avid student researching and studying prostate cancer as a survivor and continuing patient since 1992. I have dedicated my retirement years to continued research and study in order to serve as an advocate for prostate cancer awareness, and, from a activist patient's viewpoint, to help patients, caregivers, and others interested develop an understanding of prostate cancer, its treatment options, and the treatment of the side effects that often accompany treatment. Readers of this paper must understand that the comments or recommendations I make are not intended to be the procedure to blindly follow; rather, they are to be reviewed as my opinion, then used for further personal research, study, and subsequent discussion with the medical professional/physician providing prostate cancer care.

I responded to another person in the past regarding flaxseed and flaxseed oil, and my response was followed by a physician friend who is also a prostate cancer patient...read my response and then the response to my posting below:

Flaxseed and particularly flaxseed oil requires close attention since flaxseed oil is rich in alpha- linolenic acid (ALA). Because of the potential for side effects and interactions with medications, dietary supplements should be taken only under the supervision of a knowledgeable healthcare provider.

Flaxseed may slow down the absorption of oral medications or other nutrients if taken at the same time. Try to avoid taking flaxseed at the same time as medications and other supplements.

People with either diabetes or schizophrenia may lack the ability to convert ALA to EPA and DHA, the forms more readily used in the body. Therefore, those with either condition should obtain their omega-3 fatty acids from dietary sources rich in EPA and DHA.

Although studies have found that regular consumption of fish (which includes the omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA) may reduce the risk of macular degeneration, a recent study including two large groups of men and women found that diets rich in ALA may substantially increase the risk of this disease. More research is needed in this area. Until this information becomes available, it is best for people with macular degeneration to obtain

omega-3 fatty acids from sources of EPA and DHA, rather than ALA.

Similar to macular degeneration, fish and fish oil may protect against prostate cancer, but ALA may be associated with increased risk of prostate cancer in men. More research in this area is needed. (READ THAT AGAIN)

Hi, Chuck:

I'm seconding your recent email on flaxseed with additional data.

The ridiculous claims about flaxseed has been a pet peeve of mine, for the following reasons:

Flaxseed is an Omega-3 fatty acid. However, it is a short chain omega three fatty acid that is NOT converted to EPA and DHA (the essential omega-3 fatty acid components that are in fish oil), BECAUSE HUMANS DO NOT HAVE THE ENZYME THAT DOES THIS CONVERSION (see "Inflammation Nation", by Dr. Floyd Chilton). Feed flaxseed oil to fish, and they'll produce EPA and DHA- they have the enzyme that does this. Humans don't- therefore flaxseed is NOT a source of these essential fatty acids when consumed by humans. This has been known since the mid-1980's- yet, the flaxseed industry has succeeded in flogging flaxseed consumption for decades.

A best selling book by Dr. Robert Arnot some years ago stated that women could prevent breast cancer by consuming enough flaxseed oil- without a shred of scientific evidence that flaxseed oil had any favorable effect whatsoever on breast cancer.

I was a principle investigator for the AREDS study (Age Related Eye disease Study) (a double blind NIH trial involving 5,000 patients over age 50, who were followed for 15 years) that showed that megadoses of certain vitamins and minerals reduced the incidence of macular degeneration. Flaxseed oil was NOT STUDIED in this AREDS study.

It is rare to see an article like yours questioning the common but erroneous acceptance of flaxseed oil as a vital source of essential fatty acids- when it clearly is NOT!

Congratulations again on another of your successful debunking of many common myths, such as this one about flaxseed oil!

Your admiring supporter of your information crusade, Richard G. Chenoweth, MD  
2/17/2009

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You can purchase a lengthy paper by renowned Medical Oncologist Charles E. “Snuffy” Myers, specializing specifically in the treatment of advanced prostate cancer. Here is info:

The <sup>3</sup>Snuffy<sup>2</sup> Myers family is pleased to announce the newest addition to our catalogue and our first comprehensive look at why prostate cancer patients should avoid flaxseed and flaxseed oil.

To purchase Flaxseed: Panacea or Poison, A Health Manifesto click visit

<http://www.prostateforum.com/flaxseed.html>

Flaxseed: Panacea or Poison, A Health Manifesto confronts the controversial subject of the real health benefits of flaxseed and flaxseed oil.

Dr. Myers explains:

- why flaxseed is not an effective source of omega 3 fats for humans;
- that most of the health benefits claimed for flaxseed have little or no support in the medical literature;
- how flaxseed oil may actually accelerate the rate at which your prostate cancer grows;
- how flaxseed is a classic example of marketing hype and medical misinformation;
- and why fish or fish oil is a better bet for your overall health.

The booklet costs \$10 plus shipping and handling and is available for purchase at [www.prostateforum.com](http://www.prostateforum.com).

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For Partners & Loved Ones

Dr. Myers explains how flaxseed is such a poor source of omega 3 fatty acids for everyone other than pre-menopausal women that you're much better off just eating fish, taking fish supplements, or taking algae-derived DHA supplements like Life's DHA.

We look forward to hearing from you and good health for the New Year. And if you have any questions, e-mail [jessica@prostateforum.com](mailto:jessica@prostateforum.com)