



Pearl City Medical Associates, Inc.

# OMEGA 3 FATTY ACIDS

## EICOSAPENTAENOIC ACID (EPA)

Information provided by: *Natural Medicines Consumer Information and Education*

### What is Eicosapentaenoic Acid?

Eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) is a fatty acid that is found in the tissues of marine mammals and oily fish.

### How Does It Work?

EPA thins the blood and decreases triglycerides.

### Any Interactions?

- **Anticoagulant/antiplatelet herbs and supplements**

Angelica, clove, danshen, garlic, ginger, ginko, Panax ginseng, red clover, turmeric, and others.

- **Herbs and supplements with hypotensive effects**

Andrographis, casein peptides, cat's claw, coenzyme Q10, fish oil, L-arginine, lycium, stinging nettle, theanine, and others.

- **Anticoagulant/antiplatelet drugs:**

Blood thinners.

- **Antihypertensive drugs:**

Blood pressure medications.

- **Foods:**

No known interactions.

### IS IT EFFECTIVE?

According to *Natural Medicines*, EPA is **LIKELY EFFECTIVE** for the following:

- **Hypertriglyceridemia**

Clinical research shows that taking ethyl EPA (Vascepa and Amarin) 2 grams or 4 grams daily for 12 weeks reduces levels residually high triglyceride levels despite treatment with statins. Vascepa is FDA-approved to be used with diet modification to reduce triglyceride levels in adult patients with severe hypertriglyceridemia.

According to *Natural Medicines*, EPA is **POSSIBLY EFFECTIVE** for the following:

- **Depression**


Analyses of clinical research show that pure EPA or omega 3 fatty acid enriched in EPA (at least 60%) moderately reduces depressive symptoms in patients with major depressive disorder (MDD) and those with depressive symptoms. However, in patients not using standard therapy, taking EPA enriched omega 3 fatty acid standardized to contain EPA 1060mg and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) 274mg daily for 8 weeks does not reduce symptoms of depression in patients with MDD. Some research suggests that EPA may help prevent the development of major depression in patients treated with interferon-alpha.

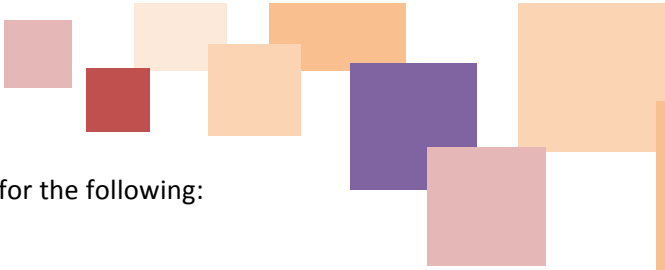
- **Menopausal Symptoms**

EPA may reduce in the frequency of hot flashes.

- **Personality Disorder**

Taking ethyl EPA 1 gram per day orally for 8 weeks modestly improves aggressive behavior and depression in women with moderately severe borderline personality disorder.





According to *Natural Medicines*, EPA is **POSSIBLY INEFFECTIVE** for the following:

- Age-related macular degeneration (AMD)
- Allergic rhinitis (hayfever)
- Asthma
- Cystic fibrosis
- Diabetes
- Eclampsia
- Hypertension
- Intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR)

According to *Natural Medicines*, there is **INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE** to rate the effectiveness of EPA for:

- Alzheimer’s disease
- Attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Cachexia
- Chemotherapy toxicity
- Lung cancer
- Myocardial infarction (MI)
- Plaque psoriasis
- Prostate cancer
- Schizophrenia

**Any Safety concerns?**

EPA is **LIKELY SAFE** when used orally or intravenously, and appropriately.

EPA is **POSSIBLY UNSAFE** when used orally in high doses. Doses greater than 3 grams daily might decrease blood coagulation and increase the risk of bleeding.

**Special Precautions & Warnings:**

- Pregnancy and breastfeeding

There is insufficient reliable information; avoid using.

**Any side effects?**

Side effects of EPA include:

- Loose stools or diarrhea
- Epigastric discomfort
- Skin rash
- Itching
- Nosebleeds
- Joint pain
- Back pain
- Muscle pain
- Nausea
- Belching
- “Fishy” taste

See additional brochures for information about the other two omega 3 fatty acids:

- Docosahexaenoic Acid (DHA)
- Alpha-linolenic Acid



