**Linum usitatissimum**: Anti-bacterial Activity, Chromatography, Bioactive Compounds, Applications: A Review

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**ABSTRACT**

Flax is a food and fiber crop cultivated in cooler regions of the world. The flowers are pure pale blue, 15–25 mm in diameter, with five petals. The fruit is a round, dry capsule 5–9 mm in diameter, containing several glossy brown seeds shaped like an apple pip, 4–7 mm long. Flax is grown for its oil, used as a nutritional supplement, and as an ingredient in many wood-finishing products. Flax is also grown as an ornamental plant in gardens. Flax fibers are used to make linen. The Latin species name usitatissimum means “most useful. The oil is applied externally to treat joint and muscle pains, non-healing wounds, skin disorders. Flaxseed oil also helps in speeding up the healing of skin lesions and has proved very effective for everything acne, psoriasis, eczema, and sunburn. Omega-3 fatty acids offer protection against heart disease by getting to the membrane of body cells and acting as guards that admit only healthy substances and bar damaging ones.

**Keyword:** Biological action, *Linum usitatissimum*, Review, Chromatography, Bioactive compounds, Applications.

**INTRODUCTION**

The textiles made from flax are known in the Western countries as linen, and traditionally used for bed sheets, underclothes, and table linen. The oil is known as linseed oil. The plant species is known only as a cultivated plant, and appears to have been domesticated just once from the wild species Linum bienne, called pale flax. Cultivated flax plants grow to 1.2 m (3 ft 11 in) tall, with slender stems. The leaves are glaucous green, slender lanceolate, 20–40 mm long, and 3 mm broad. Several other species in the genus Linum are similar in appearance to *L. usitatissimum*, cultivated flax, including some that have similar blue flowers, and others with white, yellow, or red flowers. Some of these are perennial plants, unlike *L. usitatissimum*, which is an annual plant. Flax fibers are taken from the stem of the plant, and are two to three times as strong as those of cotton. Additionally, flax fibers are naturally smooth and straight. Europe and North America depended on flax for vegetable-based cloth until the 19th century, when cotton overtook flax as the most common plant used for making rag-based paper. Flaxseed and its oil have repeatedly been demonstrated to be nontoxic and are generally recognized as safe for human consumption. Flax, like many common foods, contains small amounts of cyanogenic glycoside; these are nontoxic when consumed in typical amounts, but may be toxic in large quantities from consuming staple foods such as cassava. Typical concentrations (for example, 0.48% in a sample of defatted dehusked flaxseed meal) can be removed by special processing.

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Cardio-protective

It is used in the treatment of cardiac disorders and cholesterol. It acts as a blood thinning agent. Hence, it is useful in preventing and treating atherosclerosis (cholesterol and clot development in blood pipes of the heart).

Pharmacological activities

Anti-inflammatory activity

Some studies investigated the effect of fixed oil present in flaxseed on distinct phases of inflammation. *Linum usitatissimum* fixed oil demonstrated a significant dose-dependent inhibition of protein exudation (i.e., the rise in protein concentration in peritoneal fluid) and inhibited the vascular permeability shown by inhibition to dye leakage.

Anti-estrogenic Activity

Some studies investigated that potential phytoestrogens isolated from flaxseed significantly stimulate estrogen production in MCF7 breast cancer cells. They also observed a down-regulation of ERβ receptor expression and down-regulation of PR expression in MCF7 cells after treatment.

Anti-ulcerogenic action

Some studies investigated the effect of mucilage and fixed oil on the gastric lesions induced by ethanol. Their study provides clear evidence that consumption of the products of flaxseed (oil and mucilage) have gastro-protective effect against ethanol-induced gastric ulcers.

Anti-bacterial activity

Studies investigated the effect of flaxseed proteins on the several species of gram positive and gram-negative bacteria.

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REFERENCES