

# Lignans Offer New Hope for 15 Million Women with Few Options

## High Levels of Lignans Linked to Breast & Reproductive Health

by G. Megan Shields, M.D.

Women suffering from premenstrual syndrome, and peri-, pre-, menopausal and postmenopausal discomforts have been left with few viable and safe alternatives following the shocking news that traditional hormone replacement therapy (HRT) may cause many of the diseases it was thought to prevent, such as breast cancer, heart disease, stroke and dementia. For specific conditions, HRT benefits still might yet prove to outweigh risks. Yet, at least one-quarter of all women who try to quit HRT cannot because of hot flashes and other troublesome symptoms, according to a recent article from WebMD.

Fortunately, one of the bright spots in women's health for 2005 comes from an entirely natural source—flaxseed's lignans.

With the demise of HRT, many women have turned to herbal medicine, where among the biggest-selling herbs for women's health are soy, black cohosh, and red clover, according to market surveys. But none of these supplements contain significant

lignans. If women who are trying to quit HRT do not find relief from black cohosh, red clover or soy alone, the problem could be they are missing their lignans.

More and more health experts are now telling women that naturally occurring lignans are truly heroic when it comes to women's health, but, unfortunately, in short supply in the diet. So critical are lignans historically and biologically to women's health, Dr. F. O. Stephens writes (in the November 1997 *Australian New Zealand Journal of Surgery*), "As humans evolved with a variety of leguminous plants as basic food, human physiology appears to have depended upon the anti-estrogen property of ingested lignans and isoflavonoids..."

Unfortunately, while soy, red clover and black cohosh supplements do supply isoflavonoids, only flaxseed is a notable and body-friendly source, and only Brevail®, a product available now in health food stores, is university tested.

That is why all women at all stages of life should consider Brevail as a means of balancing and buffering powerful hormones in their body, and to battle dangerous environmental forms of estrogen (xenoestrogens)—even if they are already using black cohosh, red clover, or soy.

### LIGNANS FOR LIFE

What do lignan-rich plants have to do with maintaining a safe and healthy estrogen balance or with reducing risk of breast cancer?

Lignans are naturally structurally similar to estrogen cells, which enables

## PMS and Menopause

Besides contributing to breast health directly, lignans may address the following symptoms associated with menstrual and menopausal discomforts:

- Diminish hot flashes
- Reduce cramping and bloating
- Improve mood
- Decrease breast pain (mastalgia)
- Address insomnia
- Harmonize hormones
- Reduce fatigue
- Reduce migraines

Additionally:

- Preserve healthy breast tissue
- Support heart health
- Improve complexion and skin tone
- Strengthen hair and nails

Says Carla H., 39, a flight attendant, "Brevail has reduced my moodiness surrounding my monthly cycle."



them to lock onto receptor sites and therefore block out excess levels of estrogen that can lead to tumors. Women's bodies have evolved for millennia with these naturally occurring plant hormones, and today when in such short dietary supply, they are more critical than ever. In times of estrogen excess, they act as buffers in women's bodies to displace toxic forms of estrogen. Yet, if women's own circulating estrogen levels are low, lignans supply gentle and safe estrogen-like benefits (because of their remarkably close resemblance to real estrogen and ability to mimic its beneficial effects). Yet, unlike dangerous estrogen, these phytoestrogen lignans have only a short half-life in the body and they do not accumulate in fatty tissues like toxic estrogenic chemicals. These lignans clearly support healthy cells and, as a medical doctor, I think this is very important.

No wonder so many studies not only show women with healthy lignan concentrations in their blood enjoy superb

**Brevail Buzz** When supplemented by Brevail, women find true relief for the first time in years, according to the company's website.



Barbara M., of Bellingham, Washington, states: "I am not having any of the severe PMS symptoms or migraines that I was having for months! I feel like my hormones are in balance once again."

reproductive and breast health, but also very low risks of the kinds of maladies typically found in women who use HRT.

Unfortunately, daily phytoestrogen intake of postmenopausal women participating in the Framingham study was estimated to be less than 1 mg/day with 80 percent from lignans and 20 percent from isoflavones.

Studies show American women have a very low intake of phytoestrogens compared to women consuming traditional diets who are largely free from the same high rates of troubling health conditions like heart disease, osteoporosis, and perimenopausal and menopausal symptoms. In fact, several recent reports from several medical journals confirm earlier studies that low levels of lignans are risky to women's health.

"Low levels of lignans, namely enterolactone, have been reported to be associated with an increased risk of breast cancer in the general female population," states a study in the January 2004 issue of the *European Journal of Cancer*. The study analyzed the lignan levels of 383 women who had palpable cysts over the course of 6.5 years, and found that the levels of lignans were significantly lower in women who subsequently developed breast cancer.

Another study of 278 women in Germany published in the *International Journal of Cancer* found that the lignans enterodiol, enterolactone, and matairesinol would be beneficial in lowering breast cancer risk.

Finally, a study of about 1,100 women in western New York, documented in the same journal in Septem-

ber 2004, saw that the women who had the most lignans in their diet have reduced breast cancer risk.

### IF YOU HAVE HAD TROUBLE QUITTING HRT

After learning of the recently discovered risks associated with hormone replacement therapy, most women have tried to stop using it.

However, one-quarter of them say they are unable to discontinue it because of hot flashes and other troublesome problems, according to WedMD.

If you've been using soy, black cohosh or red clover and still can't quit, you might not be receiving adequate lignans.

Brevail's lignans have demonstrated the ability to address symptoms of menstrual and menopausal symptoms, as well as support breast and heart health. They are part of a complete health program for men and women but are in extremely short supply in the American diet.

I am also impressed by the medical support Brevail has among women doctors.

- According to Christine Horner, M.D., a breast cancer reconstructive surgeon, mounting research is revealing that lignans serve as gentle yet powerful breast cancer preventatives with the value-added benefit of addressing symptoms of PMS and menopause.
- Mary K. Barnhart, M.D., a breast surgeon at Rose City Breast Care, in Portland, Oregon, states, "For women who are committed to a total program of good breast health and breast cancer risk reduction, Brevail offers an

in its definitive work on lignans is Brevail, which was the only lignan supplement that is university researched and developed to increase lignan concentrations in the body to match levels found in women who collectively demonstrate an extraordinary history of breast health.

- According to the Pauling Institute, "Dietary supplements containing lignans derived from flaxseed are available in the U.S. without a prescription. One such supplement provides 50 mg of secoisolariciresinol diglycoside per capsule." That supplement is Brevail.



Says Teresa H., 33, of Sandy Point, Washington, "I have had much less symptoms related to PMS and the time between periods is longer now."

excellent way to address those needs for many women. Its added ability to contribute to natural hormonal balance makes Brevail a truly timely and valuable supplement to today's women in all stages of life." ■

## Resources

Women experiencing symptoms associated with PMS and menopause—as well as women concerned with breast health or who are trying to quit HRT—should consider Brevail as a safe, natural and effective approach to address these concerns.

**How much does it cost?** Brevail retails for \$19.99 for a one-month's supply.

**Where can I find it?** Brevail is available in select health food stores and other natural health centers.

**Free Sample** While supplies last, a free sample of Brevail is available complete with an informative CD by calling (888) 503-8300, e-mailing [sample@brevail.com](mailto:sample@brevail.com) or writing to Lignan Research, 9921 Carmel Mountain Road #339, San Diego, CA 92129.



### Contact Information

For more information call Brevail at: (800) 503-8300 or log onto: [www.brevail.com](http://www.brevail.com)

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Did You Know?

## Brevail Facts

- Thirty women participated in human oral dosing clinical studies with Brevail. Lignan levels were raised and maintained in urine and blood comparable to women with an extraordinary history of breast and hormonal health.
- The Cancer Recovery Foundation of America is now including Brevail samples and educational information in survival kits that are mailed to cancer survivors and those interested in cancer prevention.
- The supplement that the Linus Pauling Institute Center for Micronutrient Information at Oregon State University mentions