

# OUR SKIN: THE BENEFITS OF HEMP

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**O**ur natural resource Hemp yields three raw materials; bast fiber, seeds & seeds. Using these three ingredients in different ways, thousands of products can be made, all of which are biodegradable, including a strong plastic. Hemp is a valuable, sustainable eco-friendly resource, and is loved due to all its many uses, for purposes of this article I will be focusing on the seed's oil and how it benefits the skin. As consumers I believe the more you understand how ingredients work, the more prepared you will be to effectively use them and make healthy purchases.

Skin is our largest and arguably most important organ. Our skin has numerous responsibilities such as temperature control, sensory collection, protection and moisture regulation. Let me give a brief overview of how our skin regulates moisture so you can appreciate the value of utilizing Hemp seed oil.

Moisture regulation is carried out through a "barrier" produced by our skin; it is on the surface called the epidermis. The epidermis has a layer, the stratum corneum, which is comprised of skin cells, held together by lipids. Our skin cells are continuously dying, shedding and being replaced by new ones. This cycle is controlled by the health of the "barrier". The key to the integrity of this barrier is moisture, specifically keeping water inside the skin. In order to do this you need apply a humectant (something that attracts or holds water). Hemp seed oil replenishes our (EFA'S), which helps our skin hold moisture, making it a natural humectant. The effectiveness of our barrier function is what determines the moisture level of our skin, thus the health, softness and smoothness. Essential Fatty Acids (EFA'S) specifically Omega 6, Omega 3 and Omega 9 preserve this barrier.

Hemp seed oil is made up of 80% essential fatty acid, the highest amount of any other plant. Hemp seed oil prevents moisture loss on a physiological level; it does just not merely "coat" the skin as do other oils. It contains the ideal ratio of Omega 6 to Omega 3 based on our cells needs. Hemp so closely matches our own skins lipids it is able to penetrate inside our cells and lubricate the surface between them, thus bringing the EFA's within our body. For this reason EFA's have been proven to play a preventative role in skin aging and a healthy moisture balance.

Not only does Hemp seed oil contribute greatly to the barrier function and appearance it also has other skin benefits such as offering relief to acne, minor abrasions, psoriasis and eczema. Hemp is also the only plant oil containing Vitamin D, which is necessary for Calcium absorption, especially useful to vegans. Using Hemp seed oil is a great way to achieve soft, smooth and hydrated skin.

Hopefully the more people understand the value of hemp, not only for our skin but for its abundant possibilities, a stronger concern for the legalization of industrial hemp can arise. At this

time there are many organizations fighting the battle that need your support. So please begin or continue to purchase hemp products, and if able, join in the cause. Legalizing industrial Hemp to be grown here in America will lower the cost to consumers and provide a bounty of eco-friendly products that will help keep this world a beautiful, healthy place.

**Written by: Kathy Davis**