

As discussed, please find some information on the linseed (flax) for cholesterol and other health benefits. Flax can be found at the Bulk Barn or regular health store. Perhaps this might be beneficial to discuss with your medical doctor.

Flax seed, also known as linseed (graine de lin), is an ancient crop that has its origin traced back to 3,000 B.C. when cultivated by the Babylonians. It has been grown all over the world, with its higher production as a field crop noted in fertile river valleys. Around 650 B.C. Hippocrates wrote about the soothing nature of eating flax to relieve abdominal pains. There are two types of flax seed. One type is grown for the seed use and considered an oil seed variety. The other is grown specifically for fiber production to be utilized in the texture industry. In North America, it is primarily the oil seed varieties which are produced commercially.

Flax content distributed by North American Nutrition is comprised of 40% oil (containing omega-3 fatty acids), 22% protein, 26% total dietary fiber (lignans and flax seed gum), and 4% minerals.

Found at the store as Golden Flax Seed, this high fiber content has been demonstrated to help reduce cholesterol & heart disease. Flax seed contains lignans and omega-3, natural preventative properties for heart disease. Studies showed that when flax seed is added to the diet, harmful LDL (abbreviation for low-density lipoprotein cholesterol) drops, while good HDL (abbreviation for high-density lipoprotein cholesterol remains or increases).

HDL (high-density lipoprotein cholesterol) is often referred to as the “good cholesterol”. And helps clear the blood stream of the artery-clogging properties we ingest with too much fried foods, baked goods and red meats. Yet, HDL cannot do an adequate job when the LDL (low-density lipoprotein cholesterol) the “bad cholesterol” levels in the diet are overwhelmingly high or when we do not take in enough omega-3 fatty acids.

The diet of our ancestors included a good balance of essential fatty acids (EFA). Essential fatty acids (EFA) are grouped into two families, the omega-6 EFAs and the omega-3 EFAs. The omega groups are considered the “good fats” or known as the polyunsaturated fats. The omega-6 fatty acids are found in corn, safflower, sunflower, canola and soybean oils. Omega-3 EFAs are found in flaxseeds and flaxseed oil along with fish such as salmon, herring, trout, sardines and albacore tuna. Ground flaxseed and flaxseed oil provide a natural and concentrated level of omega-3 EFAs, without concern for chemical contamination that may be a risk with fish consumption.

By lowering LDL cholesterol, a person is able to significantly reduce risk of heart disease and accompanying health complications. Current dietary advice for those at risk from coronary artery disease focus on the restriction of saturated fatty acids and cholesterol intake, combined with exercise and ideal body weight. Also emphasized is the need to increase intake of alpha-linolenic acid – the major component of the omega-3 fatty acids found in flax seed.

The September 1998 Health magazine highlighted the heart-healthy properties of flax seed, noting a 1993 study where flax seed added to the daily diet significantly lowered cholesterol. 50 grams (.28 cup) a heaping 1/4 cup measured before grinding (.36cup) (3/8 cup of milled) of ground flax seed was added to the menu of healthy females for four weeks. The additions of flax seed to the women's diets allowed their total cholesterol to drop 9%. Of greater significance, their LDL, the kind that clogs arteries, dropped 18%. Remember, this is just after 4 weeks of trial tests. Research continued and gained greater significance and validity to the healthful properties of flax seed.

In summary, the omega-3 fatty acids, fiber and lignans in flax seed are major helpers in keeping arteries flexible. Stiffened blood vessel walls are also caused by conditions of high blood pressure and diabetes, which can also lead to high risks of stroke and heart attack. It is helpful to know that the properties of flax seed are also useful in maintaining blood pressure and healthy blood sugar levels.

I hope this will be beneficial. Also, you can find more information on goldenflax.com web site or healthboard.com.