

Omega Fatty Acids

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Generic Name

[Omega-3 and omega 6-fatty acids](#)

Brand Names

Drs. Foster and Smith Vitacaps, Drs. Foster and Smith Vitacoat, Derm Caps, EFA-Caps and Liquid, Omega EFA, 3V Caps, Omega-3 Caps

Type of Drug

Fatty acid supplements

Form and Storage

Capsules and liquids

Store in a cool, dry place.

Indications for Use

Aid in management of itching and inflammation associated with allergies, idiopathic seborrhea, certain cancers, dull and dry hair coats, and, in cats, itching due to [miliary dermatitis](#) and eosinophilic granuloma complex. Are also thought to support the health of joints and other organs in the body.

General Information

Available by prescription and over the counter. The two main types of fatty acids are omega-3 and omega-6. These are necessary to have in a certain level in the diet to allow for healthy skin and haircoat and the normal functioning of many other body systems. May take 2-3 months before notice an effect from the treatment. May need to treat seasonally. Recommended to give year-round for the best results.

Usual Dose and Administration

See label on container. Usually given twice a day.

Side Effects

May see vomiting or diarrhea if given in higher doses. Cut back on the amount given and slowly (over a period of a week or more) increase the dose to the recommended amount.

Contraindications/Warnings

If product includes vitamin A, determine the amount of vitamin A in the food and any other supplements which are given so the entire amount of vitamin A given is not over the maximum recommended amount.

Drug or Food Interactions

No known food interactions.

Overdose/Toxicity

May see vomiting, diarrhea. In rare cases of extreme overdose, could see pancreatitis (an inflammation of the pancreas caused by an increase of fat in the diet). If product contains vitamin A, may see vitamin A toxicosis if excessive amounts of the supplement are given.

Summary

Fatty acid supplements are used in dogs and cats to relieve itching associated with allergies, add luster and improve the health of coat and skin, and reduce inflammation associated with many conditions. Often the pet will need to take the fatty acid supplement for 2-3 months before a positive effect is seen. Overdosage can result in vomiting or diarrhea.