

## NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS FOR PAIN

A number of over-the-counter supplements have been identified to decrease pain symptoms and have other beneficial impact on quality of life. We want you to understand that these supplements are **not regulated as drugs by the FDA** and therefore there are **no guarantees of purity or quality assurance**. **Consumer Labs** provides independent laboratory testing of health and nutrition products. We have listed below several over-the-counter supplements and vitamins and commercial sources recommended by Consumer Labs. We have no relationship with either Consumer Labs or the companies making the supplements.

### For Neuropathic Pain:

**Acetyl L-carnitine (ALC)** is currently being studied as an agent that impacts mitochondrial function, which is thought to play a significant role in peripheral nerve injury related pain. In randomized controlled trials, it has been shown to improve neuropathic pain in diabetic patients, as well as in chemotherapy-induced pain. It also helps reduce the effects of cognitive impairment in early dementia and Alzheimer's, and is being used as a "smart drug". Some low-cost options suggested by Consumer Labs include:

- Doctor's Best Acetyl-L-Carnitine 500 mg
- Jarrow Formulas Acetyl-L-Carnitine 500 mg (*vegan/vegetarian, gluten-free*)
- Vitacost Acetyl-L-Carnitine 500 mg (*gluten-free*)

**Alpha lipoic acid (ALC)** has been studied extensively for neuropathic pain. In randomized clinical trials, it has been shown to have benefits in diabetic patients with peripheral neuropathic pain. It is used extensively in Europe, particularly Germany for neuropathic pain. Its molecular mechanism is thought to be a combination of free radical scavenger and T-type calcium channels blocker. Some low-cost options suggested by Consumer Labs include:

- Natrol Alpha Lipoic Acid 600 mg (*gluten-free*)
- Olympian Labs Inc Alpha Lipoic Acid Naturopathic 400 mg (*Kosher, vegetarian, gluten-free*)
- Spring Valley Alpha Lipoic Acid 200 mg (*gluten-free*)
- Vitacost Alpha Lipoic Acid 300 mg (*gluten-free*)
- Vitamin Shoppe Alpha Lipoic Acid 300 mg

**Fish oil** or **omega 3 fatty acids** have been shown to have an integral role in the health and functioning of nerves, and there have been studies showing improvement in painful symptoms of neuropathic pain with fish oil. We recommend 1 to 2 grams of fish oil on a daily basis. Some low-cost options suggested by Consumer Labs include:

- 21-Century Omega 3 Fish Oil 1000 mg
- Kirkland Signature Natural Omega 3 Fish Oil 1000 mg (*gluten-free*)
- Vitacost Mega EFA Omega 3 EPA & DHA (*gluten-free*)
- Vitamin World Omega 3 Fish Oil (*gluten-free*)

**Vitamin C** at a dose of 1000-1500mg per day has also been studied and shown promise in helping prevent the onset or worsening of nerve injury or neuropathic processes. We do recommend utilizing this agent as well. Some low-cost options suggested by Consumer Labs include:

- Kirkland Signature (Costco) Vitamin C 1000 mg (*gluten-free*)
- Spring Valley (Walmart) Natural C 1000 mg (*gluten-free*)
- Swanson Vitamin C with Rose Hips
- Twinlab C-1000 Caps Crystalline Vitamin C
- Walgreens Vitamin C

#### **For Fibromyalgia:**

**Creatine:** There is evidence that creatine, when taken after exercises, helps with muscle pain. For patients with fibromyalgia, it may in addition provide relief of muscular pain. Some low-cost options suggested by Consumer Labs include:

- Betancourt Nutrition Creatine Chewies Tropical Splash (*tablet*)
- GNC Pro Performance Creatine Monohydrate (*powder*)
- ON Micronized Creatine Power (*powder*)

#### **For Migraines:**

**CoEnzyme Q10**, taken at 300mg daily, has been shown to help with migraine headaches. Some low-cost options suggested by Consumer Labs include:

- Kirkland Signature CoQ10 300 mg
- Member's Mark / Sam's Club CoA10 100 mg
- NSI / Vitacost CoQ10

**Riboflavin** taken at 400mg daily, may reduce the development of migraine headaches. Its major side effect is turning urine slightly orange.

**Butterbur**, also known as **Petasites**, is an herb that when taken at 75mg twice daily, may reduce migraine headaches. The main side effect is burping.

**Magnesium Citrate**, taken doses of 200-600mg, may reduce the development of migraine headaches. The side effect is diarrhea. Some low-cost options suggested by Consumer Labs include:

- CVS Pharmacy Magnesium 500 mg
- Finest Natural Magnesium 250 mg
- Life Extension Magnesium Citrate 160 mg
- Nature's Bounty Magnesium (*vegan*)
- Target Up & Up Magnesium 250 mg
- Twin Labs Magnesium Caps

#### **For Sleep:**

**Melatonin** is a naturally occurring hormone produced by the brain to regulate the body's sleep-wake cycle. Over-the-counter supplements contain synthetic or plant-derived melatonin which can be taken on an as-needed basis for sleep. Some low-cost options suggested by Consumer Labs include:

- Puritan's Pride Melatonin 3 mg
- Spring Valley (Walmart) Melatonin 3 mg
- Solgar Melatonin 10 mg (*vegetarian*)
- CVS Pharmacy Melatonin 3 mg
- MaxiHealth Formula 605 Dietary Supplement (*vegetarian and Kosher*)