

# 7 Amazing Benefits Of Sunflower Lecithin

by [John Staughton \(BASc, BFA\)](#) last updated - January 28, 2020

✓ Evidence Based

The use of [sunflower lecithin](#) has become very popular in recent years as more and more is being discovered about its potential health applications.

## What is Sunflower Lecithin?

Sunflower lecithin is actually a general term for various fatty substances that can be extracted from sunflowers. Lecithin can come from a number of different sources, but [sunflower seeds](#) are one of the most popular. Sunflower lecithin is a collection of different phospholipids, and while many people think of fats as bad things, many phospholipids are extremely important for our health. In sunflower lecithin, for example, there are numerous phospholipid types and antioxidants, along with other volatile compounds that make it a healthy supplement.

What many people fail to realize is that some types of lecithin are present in every single cell of our body, and help to protect the integrity of our cell membranes. Sunflower lecithin is a natural emulsifier, which can help it reduce the presence of other fats, as well as protect your red blood cells. Some of the most important phospholipids found in sunflower lecithin include choline, phosphatidylcholine, phosphatidylinositol, and phosphatidylethanolamine. One of the best aspects of sunflower lecithin, unlike [soy](#) lecithin, is that it can be extracted naturally, without the addition of chemicals, making it highly desirable in health circles. <sup>[1]</sup>



Lecithin gel capsules Photo Credit: Shutterstock

## Sunflower Lecithin Benefits

Sunflower lecithin has a good impact on liver and [heart](#) health and inflammation. It is also good for brain health, blood pressure, the nervous system, and cardiovascular health, among others.

### Heart Health

As an emulsifier, sunflower lecithin is able to balance the fat levels in your bloodstream, which can help to boost heart health. This can lower your risk of [atherosclerosis](#), heart attacks, and strokes, which protects your long-term heart health. <sup>[2]</sup>

## Brain Protection

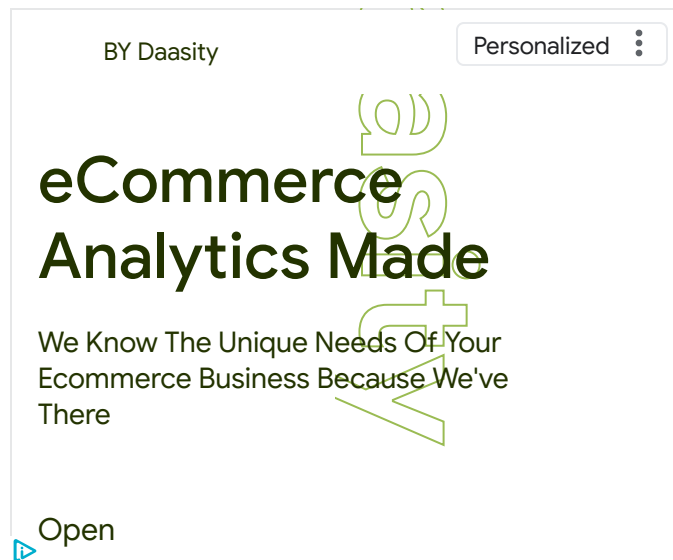
Some of the key phospholipids that make up this lecithin have been connected to brain health and the repair processes that are needed by neural cells. Regular supplementation with this lecithin can speed the process of neural regeneration and will protect the nervous system. <sup>[3]</sup>

## Liver Integrity

When the liver is overworked or is handling a large amount of excess fat, it can exacerbate many other health problems. With enough lecithin in your system, the chances of this happening are greatly reduced, since it can reduce the amount of excess fat in your bloodstream. <sup>[4]</sup>

## Blood Pressure

When the blood has too much fat in it, the arteries are likely to thicken as that fat deposits on the walls. When the arteries tighten, blood pressure increases, putting more strain on the cardiovascular system. With this lecithin in your diet, you can lower your risk of these heart problems. <sup>[5]</sup>



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## Boost the Immune System

Research has found that this phospholipid substance is able to speed the [healing](#) process and stimulate the immune system, largely due to its antioxidant effects, thanks to phosphatidylinositol and phosphatidylethanolamine. <sup>[6]</sup>

## Arthritis

One of the other effects of sunflower lecithin is the lubrication of joints and the reduction in inflammation around the body, which can make you feel younger and remain active as you age.

## Hormonal Balance

The main alternative to sunflower lecithin is soy lecithin, which can elevate estrogen levels and cause various issues, particularly in males using this supplement. With the sunflower variety, you can keep your hormonal levels in the right place. [7]

## How to Use Sunflower Lecithin?

Sunflower lecithin is primarily found as a dietary supplement ingredient in [protein](#) powders since a deficiency in lecithin can have many negative effects on overall health. However, you can also find sunflower lecithin in cosmetic products and in certain foods. This form of lecithin typically comes in the form of a dehydrated powder, so it is commonly added to health shakes and smoothies. It also makes a great replacement for [butter](#) or other oils in your cooking. It adds a smooth and creamy texture to any recipe that you want to boost with a bit more health.

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## Difference Between Sunflower Lecithin & Soy Lecithin

Sunflower lecithin is a combination of phospholipids that are extracted from sunflower seeds in a mechanical and chemical-free process, making it very pure. It is also high in choline (phosphatidylcholine), while soy lecithin has a slightly different composition. Soy lecithin, on the other hand, requires chemicals to extract from soybeans, but that also comes with a higher level of estrogen, which can cause hormonal problems in the body. The fact that soybeans are often genetically engineered also raises some concerns about soy lecithin; for that reason, the sunflower variety remains extremely popular and trusted. [8]

### Sunflower Lecithin Side Effects

Aside from the benefits, there are some possible side effects, such as gastrointestinal issues, allergic reactions, and considerations for pregnant and [breastfeeding](#) women. By adding such a concentrated source of phospholipids to the diet, it can cause a negative reaction in the gut, including [diarrhea](#), inflammation or [constipation](#). Moderate use should help to avoid this, however. Those who are allergic to sunflowers should avoid this type of supplement, as should pregnant and breastfeeding women, due to the estrogen levels and the effects this lecithin can have on hormone levels.



### About the Author

John Staughton is a traveling writer, editor, publisher and photographer with English and Integrative Biology degrees from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana (USA). He co-founded the literary journal, Sheriff Nottingham, and now serves as the Content Director for Stain'd Arts, a non-profit based in Denver, Colorado. On a perpetual journey towards the idea of home, he uses words to educate, inspire, uplift and evolve.

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