
GLANDULARS IN SUPPLEMENTS

by: Robert Thiel, PhD

Some natural health products contain glandular ingredients and many doctors have used glandulars for years with great success. Glandular organs, such as heart, aorta, and liver, have been a food source in the human diet for centuries. The consumption of glandulars is believed to provide nutritional support to the corresponding gland in the human body. Glandulars contain nutritional peptides, enzymes, and substances believed to be hormone precursors.

However, it is unclear precisely how these substances may affect energy levels, health, and/or mental function. Glandular therapy has alternative names such as: organotherapy, cell therapy where extracts are injected; and live cell therapy which normally uses extracts orally or intravenously.

Unlike plants, fauna have most of the same biological materials (like enzymes and other peptides) that humans do.¹

Adrenal glandular support is often used by people who are under stress, fatigued, having difficulty getting up in the morning, who have adrenal stress headaches, or have an abnormal craving for salts.² Adrenal tissue is normally taken with meals. The adrenal glands produce hormones such as aldosterone, cortisol, DHEA, dopamine, corticosteroids, epinephrine, and nor-epinephrine.

Brain glandulars contain “specific brain cell activators”³ and have been advised for slowness of thought, loss of memory, uncontrolled mental activity, nightmares, mental retardation, and epilepsy.^{4,5} A double-blind study involving bovine-brain derived phosphatidylserine found it was able to improve both behavior and cognition in elderly people with cognitive decline.⁶ “...phosphatidylserine enhances the ability of enzymes in membranes of nerve cells to relay messages in and out of the cells. Research suggests that the glandular source phosphatidylserine is more effective than soy isolate sources.”²⁷

Cardiovascular glandulars are normally made from

bovine heart. This tissue is sometimes used by people with low blood pressure, overwhelming fatigue, people who need strength, people who feel cold, and athletes interested in improved performance. It is normally best not to take heart tissue late in the day (at breakfast and lunchtime is best for most people), as any heart glandular support product can affect sleep if taken late in the day.⁸ Heart tissue, if appropriate, tends to show its benefits rather quickly (within a week or two for most people), though this varies. Heart tissue has historically also been used as an aid in glucose uptake and the manufacture of ATPs.⁵

Eye glandular tissue, if available, is often taken for eye and vision issues, including macular degeneration.

The hypothalamus is the body’s master endocrine gland and many find bovine hypothalamus can help some who have a variety of health concerns. Clinically, it often seems to help those who are anxious or nervous. The hypothalamus controls the pituitary which produces a lot of hormones and controls several other endocrine glands.

Liver is probably the most widely used glandular supplements. The liver is the chemical factory of the body and feeding the liver can help when other approaches have not been effective. Historically, bovine liver has also been used for some enlarged livers, forms of anemia, and for support when chronic degenerative diseases are encountered.⁵ Clinically, it seems helpful for many who have raised liver enzymes, especially if given with detoxifying herbs like silymarin, red beet, and garlic.

Bovine lung tissue has historically been used by those with respiratory disorders (such as bronchitis, asthma, chronic coughs, chest colds), convalescent stages (of pneumonia, colds, flu), and pulmonary involvements (including accidents, industrial fumes, dust inhalation, and even adrenal insufficiency).⁹

Some women take bovine mammary tissue. The breasts are involved in lactation, sexual attraction, and sexual response. Bovine mammary tissue has been sometimes advised for disorders related to female breasts such as nipple pain, lymph node enlargement, breast underdevelopment, mastitis, menstrual pain, nipple inflammation, congestion, and lactation difficulties.¹⁰ It may be of interest to note that the National Cancer Institute has studied bovine mammary tissue to find out what may be in it that helps prevent cows from getting breast cancer.

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