

*Epilobium has shown remarkable benefits for prostate cancer, benign prostatic hyperplasia and prostatitis. It may even help with hair loss.*

## An Ancient Herb and Its Modern Application IN PROSTATE HEALTH

When you were a kid, “the old man” was how you affectionately referred to your father. He was probably in his 40s at the time and seemed ancient. But now that you’re in your 40s, that “old man” may be you, especially when it comes to prostate health, because your 40s are when screenings for prostate cancer, benign prostatic hyperplasia and prostatitis should begin. With it being National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month, there couldn’t be a better time to pay attention to your prostate health.

According to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), prostate cancer is the second most common form of cancer and the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths among American men. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that a prostate specific antigen (PSA) test approved in 1986 by the Food and Drug Administration can detect prostate cancer in its earliest stages.

Although cancer screenings are very important, they are just one health concern related to the prostate. As men age, the prostate may become a source of other troubles that can but don’t always include cancer. And since the symptoms of some prostate conditions can mimic cancer, many men who learn they have a problem often assume the

worst. That’s why it’s important to understand the prostate and how potential changes might affect your health—and what natural supplements you can take to ensure your prostate ages healthfully.

### THE PROSTATE: POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

The prostate is a walnut-shaped gland found only in men that functions as part of the male reproductive system. It sits just below the bladder and surrounds the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder. As you age, the prostate grows larger. It’s when it becomes too large that problems can occur.

For men under 50, the most common problem is prostatitis, or an inflamed prostate. It can cause a burning feeling when you urinate or frequent urination. It may be a sign that your body is fighting an infection, in which case it can most likely be treated with an antibiotic. However, nonbacterial prostatitis does not respond to antibiotics and requires other forms of treatment.

If you’re over 50, prostate enlargement or benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) is the most common prostate problem. While older men are more at risk for prostate cancer, BPH is much more common, affecting about 30 percent of men aged 50 plus, 50 percent of men in their 60s, and as many as 90 percent in their 70s and 80s. The prostate becomes so enlarged that it squeezes the urethra, causing problems in urination. You may have a frequent and urgent need to urinate but have trouble getting started. You may have only a small amount of urine released and even after you’ve finished, have a strong feeling that you still “need to go.” It can lead to urinary tract infections and, in worse case scenarios, kidney damage.

Of course, prostate cancer, which will affect one in six men over the course of their lifetimes, is the most serious prostate problem, causing some 27,050 deaths this year alone (according to the American Cancer Society).

### THE PROSTATE: POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Prostate problems like BPH are often treated with prescription drugs like Flomax (tamsulosin) and Proscar, though side effects can be unpleasant. Among the side effects you might experience: mild dizziness, sleep problems, decreased sex drive, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat and fainting.

For those who don’t wish to risk such side effects, there is natural, safe prostate support avail-

able. Saw palmetto is probably the best known of the prostate-supportive herbs. It comes from palm tree berries, was originally taken advantage of by Native Americans, and may be effective in cases of mild to moderate BPH. However, it does not work for all men and does not work well for more extreme cases of BPH. And it is not used to protect against prostate cancer cell growth.

The prostate gland also needs zinc, which is hard to come by in a typical diet, even a healthy one. Adding zinc supplements to your daily regimen is an easy way to help stabilize hormones and may help prevent prostate problems, but dosage levels must be carefully watched. A study published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* and noted in an online article on WebMD (July 1, 2003) found that men who consumed more than 100 mg per day of zinc were more than twice as likely to develop advanced prostate cancer than those who didn't take zinc—giving zinc the odd distinction of being helpful but potentially harmful to the prostate.

A great natural solution that comes risk-free and can help with a broad range of prostate health issues is epilobium. It contains properties that have supported prostate health for centuries and recently has shown promising results in scientific studies.

## EPILOBIUM

Epilobium is a small, flowered willow herb used in traditional medicine, particularly in Central Europe, for the treatment of prostate disorders. Epilobium has been valued for its antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial and antioxidant properties. It has been used successfully for bladder health maintenance, male health maintenance, hormonal imbalances, and urinary system health. But perhaps most encouraging to men looking for safe, natural support for prostate health, epilobium has fared well in modern scientific studies.

A study in the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* showed that *Epilobium parviflorum* helped in the treatment of both prostatitis and BPH. And in 2003, the *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology* published results of an epilobium-relevant study that specifically addressed the use of epilobium in treating BPH. The study showed that extracts of epilobium inhibit proliferation of prostate cells *in vitro* by affecting the progression of the cell cycle—a conclusion that further illustrates why epilobium would be helpful to BPH sufferers.

There are some 62 different species of epilobium. The small flower versions, such as Epilobium

parviflorum, contain flavoglycosides as well as bisitosterol, various esters of sitosterol, and sitosterol glucoside. These are the compounds considered to be the active ingredients of saw palmetto. Gallic acid derivatives are also present. These are the antioxidant actives associated with drinking green tea, and have been identified as the main constituents responsible for the inhibition of 5-alpha-reductase and aromatase enzymes, considered key in the development of prostate cancer.

Preliminary studies at the Prostate Center of Vancouver found that very low concentrations of *Epilobium parviflorum*, in the micrograms per ml level, were among the most active ever seen against abnormal cells and growths of the prostate. In the studies, Epilobium parviflorum was also found to have high antioxidant activity. More studies need to be conducted, but epilobium appears to have cancer cell inhibiting properties.

Although unrelated to the prostate, epilobium also may help to block the hormone dihydrotestosterone (DHT), the most common cause of hair loss—an added bonus for men suffering from baldness!

Because traditional use and modern research show that epilobium may help with BPH and prostatitis and holds promise in inhibiting cancer cell growth, it's a surefire choice for prostate health.

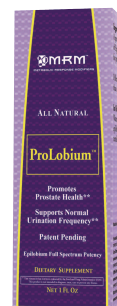
Where do you find a concentrated form of *Epilobium parviflorum*? In an herbal supplement called ProLobium™ from Metabolic Response Modifiers (MRM).

## PROSTATE HEALTH AND PROLOBIUM

ProLobium is an all-natural supplement to support prostate health. It contains 100 percent epilobium and promotes optimal prostate and urinary tract health by assisting in combating the symptoms associated with BPH and prostatitis, and even by helping keep the prostate healthy to help ward off cancer. It supports normal urination frequency and normal prostate size, and has similar effectiveness when compared with prescription medications though none of the side effects.

Inside of ProLobium, you might just find the natural choice for prostate health, as well as a potential help for hair loss. MRM's formulation captures the potency of epilobium and delivers it in a convenient liquid supplement. Just 15 drops added to juice, water or your other drink of choice twice each day provides 1,000 milligrams of *Epilobium parviflorum*. ■

—Lorin Shields-Michel



## Resources

MRM products are available nationwide at natural health centers and from health professionals. Contact MRM directly to find a store near you. The toll-free number is 800-948-6296; online at [www.mrm-usa.com](http://www.mrm-usa.com).