CLAC: The Secret Weapon in the Battle Against Cancer
By Dr. Joseph Mercola with Rachael Droge

Most people are now familiar with the benefits of omega-3 fatty acids, but there is another fatty acid that is making its way to the top of the list in terms of health potential. This fatty acid is CLA, or conjugated linoleic acid, and it has become widely popular in the form of expensive dietary supplements because of its anti-cancer and fat-fighting properties. In fact, CLA is so potent a cancer fighter that animal studies show as little as 0.5 percent CLA in the diet could reduce tumors by over 50 percent. Along with being a cancer fighter, CLA helps the body to rid itself of fat.

Why You Don't Want CLA Supplements

I'll discuss more about the benefits of this compound below, but I first want to make one thing clear. I do not recommend that you take CLA supplements of any form. As with all nutrients, it is better to get them from food than from synthetic supplements. Natural CLA found in foods is far superior to a man-made version in pill form – not to mention that CLA supplements are outrageously expensive.

Further, studies have shown the type of CLA used in supplements has been associated with an array of side effects, which include:

- Promoting insulin resistance
- Raising glucose levels
- Reducing HDL (good cholesterol)
- Stomach upset

Natural CLA in Grass-Fed Animal Foods

Your body does not make CLA, so you may be wondering how you can get natural CLA in your diet. Well there is good news: animal products like meat and dairy from grass-fed animals are rich in natural and healthy CLA. So simply increasing your intake of grass-fed meat products will increase your intake of this important fatty acid.

There is an important distinction to make here, though. Many Americans do not get enough CLA for two reasons. First, Americans as a whole have wrongly shunned many animal products when the "fear of fat" mentality swept across the nation. These animal products were contributing many health-promoting qualities to our health and CLA was just one of them. Second, most animals are no longer raised on their natural diet, grass, and instead are being raised primarily in factory farms where they are artificially fattened on grains. If you simply start eating more commercially raised meat that is in most grocery stores, your health will not benefit because these animals were not fed a healthy diet. Grass-fed animals, on the other hand, have from three to five times more CLA than grain-fed animals.

So if you're looking to increase your CLA, the best way is through grass-fed animal products. This includes not only grass-fed beef but also dairy products from grass-fed cows like raw milk, raw butter and raw milk cheese.

Why You Want CLA in Your Diet

As I mentioned above, CLA is a potent cancer-fighting substance. Animal studies have shown it could reduce the risk of numerous types of cancers including breast, prostate, colorectal, lung, skin and stomach.

Another major effect of CLA is its role in body fat. A study published in the June 2004 American Journal of Clinical Nutrition said animal studies have shown that CLA inhibits the formation of building
fat. Not only does it appear to reduce body fat; it does so while preserving muscle tissue. This is why it is so widely sold as a dietary supplement to body builders and dieters alike, but, as I mentioned above, the only safe way to increase CLA in your diet is from grass-fed animal products – not from supplements.

But that is not all. As Mary Shoman writes, studies suggest that CLA also:

- Increases metabolic rate
- Decreases abdominal fat
- Enhances muscle growth
- Lowers cholesterol and triglycerides
- Lowers insulin resistance
- Reduces food-induced allergic reactions
- Enhances immune system

**Where Can You Get Healthy, Natural CLA?**

As I have mentioned, it is important to understand that once cows, or other grass-eating animals, are fed grains, they stop producing CLA. So the ideal source to get CLA naturally, and I might add at no charge or risk, is to get it from 100 percent, exclusively grass-fed animals. The least expensive way to obtain grass-fed beef would be to find a local farmer that is producing it and purchase it from him directly to avoid high shipping fees.

As for grass-fed dairy products, you can search your local health food stores for these types of items, as many carry butter, cheese and milk from grass-fed cows. However, if you want the ideal source, you should seek out raw dairy from grass-fed cows. You can find raw, grass-fed cheese on this site, and we will have raw milk in the months to come, but until then if you are unable to find a local dairy farmer who will cooperate with you please try this link: http://www.realmilk.com/where.html.