

SHARK LIVER OIL

Synonyms

Oleum selachoide.

Biological Source

Shark liver oil is the fixed oil obtained from the fresh and healthy livers of shark fish *Hypoprion brevirostris*, belonging to family Carcharhinidae.

Chemical Constituents

The active principle of Shark liver oil is vitamin A which varies from 15,000 to 30,000 I.U. per g of the oil. It contains glycerides of saturated and unsaturated fatty acids.

Chemical Tests

A solution of shark liver oil (1 drop) in chloroform (1 ml) is treated with sulphuric acid (1 drop). A violet colour changing to purple or brown is formed due to the presence of vitamin A.

Shark liver oil (1 ml) is dissolved in chloroform (10 ml). Few drops of saturated solution of antimony trichloride in chloroform are added to the solution. A blue colour is formed due to the presence of vitamin A.

Uses

Shark liver oil is used to treat xerophthalmia (abnormal dryness of the surface of conjunctiva) occurring due to deficiency of vitamin A. The oil is nutritive and used as a tonic.

Marketed Products

It is one of the ingredients of the preparation known as Shark liver oil softgels (Now Foods).