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Gelatin free capsules

Now available from Health Plus

With the many recent problems with modern agricultural methods, leading to outbreaks of BSE in many European countries and with the foot and mouth epidemic that has seen the 'culling' of thousands of animals in the UK, it is understandable that there is a desire to move away from animal-derived substances in nutritional supplements.

Here at Health Plus, we've always prided ourselves on the quality of the products that we offer and for many years, the vast majority of our extensive range have been suitable for vegetarians. The fly in the ointment has always been capsules; it has traditionally been difficult to combine a vegetarian capsule with other ingredients to create a cost-effective vegetarian alternative. Whilst we know that many people will happily pay extra for the peace of mind that such a product would bring, we also know that there are limits and up to now, the cost has simply been too high.

But all of that is starting to change; we have for some months now been producing all of our powder-filled capsule products (such as Premier Garlic, Konjac Fibre and others) in VCaps™, which use vegetable cellulose rather than gelatin. Feedback has shown us that this was a very popular move.

That still left us with a problem, though. What about liquid-filled capsules? These have traditionally been the more difficult to produce, as (due to the difference in chemical structure when using vegetable-based material) they tend not to hold their shape, or they leak their contents. Now, in conjunction with Capsugel, producers of LVCaps™, Health Plus is happy to announce the introduction of the first of our range of Liquid Essentials.

Liquid Essentials is a range of products, presented in liquid-filled capsules. The aim is that, within a few months, we will be able to offer vegetarian, liquid-filled capsules of Evening Primrose Oil, Starflower Oil, Beta Carotene, and all those other products that have traditionally been sold in gelatin-based softgel capsules. The range is launched with two fully vegetarian and vegan products – E400 and Lecithin 550 (which is also guaranteed to be GMO free). There are also two other products, Flaxseed Oil and Garlic Macerate which fill a gap in our range and which will, in time, also become vegetarian.

"Why the wait?" I hear you ask. Ideally, there wouldn't be one and all of these wonderful new vegetarian products would be available immediately. Unfortunately, due to the differences in chemical structure mentioned earlier, each nutrient (vitamin E or evening primrose oil, for instance) has to undergo rigorous and specific testing, to find the right formulation for a good quality capsule. There isn't a 'one size fits all' formulation that would work for all supplements. I am sure, though, that everyone would rather wait a little bit longer for a high-quality product, rather than have an inferior one rush-released.

Whilst the production of vegetarian capsules is in itself good news, there is also an added bonus; there isn't a price premium! Although the Liquid Essentials products are slightly more expensive than their gelatin softgel counterparts, there is the added value of not only an attractive and easy-to-take capsule, but also the

fact that there is not an animal-based ingredient in sight. Peace of mind and good health at just a few pence extra; who could really ask for more?