

EVENING PRIMROSE  
*Oenothera*



*Oenothera* is a genus of about 145 species of herbaceous flowering plants native to the Americas. It is the type genus of the family Onagraceae. Common names include evening primrose, suncups, and sundrops. They are not closely related to the true primroses (genus *Primula*).

The flowers of many species open in the evening, hence the name "evening primrose". They may open in under a minute. Most species have yellow flowers, but some have white, purple, pink, or red. Most native desert species are white. *Oenothera caespitosa*, a species of western North America, produces white flowers that turn pink with age. One of the most distinctive features of the flower is the stigma, which has four branches in an X shape.

Most research indicates that orally-administered evening primrose oil does not relieve symptoms of premenstrual syndrome. Neither does orally administered primrose oil seem have any effect in shortening the length of pregnancy or labour.