

# Flourish

HEALTHY BODY, MIND, AND SPIRIT

Immune Effects of  
**Medicinal  
Mushrooms**

Show  
Your Heart  
*Some Love*

Eight Hidden  
*Sugar Food Traps*

Vol. 6, No. 1 · Free  
Winter 2022

# Editor's Letter



Last night I stood at my window and watched the first snowflakes of the season fall from the sky.

Surprisingly, it did not make me cringe. Instead, it brought back memories of my children excited by the first snowfall, eager to catch a slow flake on their tongue or build the perfect snowman. It reminded me of my first time on ice skates with my best friend, and the time my boyfriend tried to teach me to ski. Each involved more falling and laughing than anything else, but we did not give up. And then, I recalled the one time I saw the northern lights in person. It was a surprising, breathtaking spectacle. This magical wonder inspired me to discover more of what nature has to offer and appreciate the beauty in what surrounds us, wherever we may be. As you can imagine, this inspired the selection of visuals for this issue's cover. I hope you find it as stunning as we did, and that it will inspire you to hope, to dream, and to flourish.

Wishing you health and happiness as we embark on what I hope will be a safe and wonderful new year. Enjoy!

Sophia Golanowski, BCom, MBA  
Editor-in-Chief

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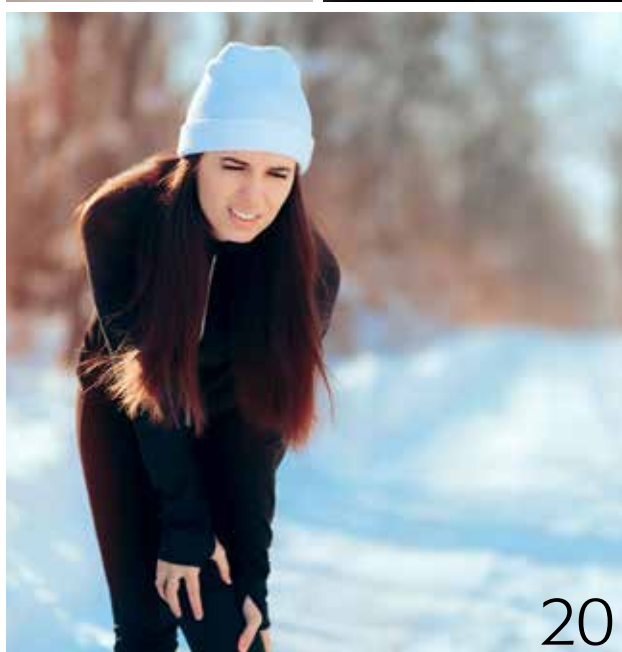
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# The Many Ways of Using Mushrooms

by Dr. Ludovic Brunel, ND

Since time immemorial, humans have consumed mushrooms. The Romans claimed them to be “food for the gods,” and of course, Chinese culture has long used them for their medicinal properties. Most civilisations consumed them for their rich flavour and for culinary purposes.

Mushrooms are a highly nutritious food, high in protein, but low in fat and carbohydrates. They are also a source of important nutrients including selenium, potassium, copper, iron, B vitamins, and fibre. Recent literature has focused on the enormous health potential of the bioactive ingredients found in mushrooms.

When it comes to the medicinal properties of mushrooms, the mode of preparation is crucial. The beneficial components are trapped in an interlaced structure made of a hard carbohydrate similar to the protein found in our hair, skin, and nails. This molecule is known as chitin, and is an integral and indigestible part of the cell wall in mushrooms.

The trick is to release the beneficial molecules from this chitin structure. Think of mining for gold in a river, or panning, a process through which particles of soil and gravel are separated from gold by washing them in a pan with water. Same goes for the active immune components found in medicinal mushrooms: The chitin must be removed in order to extract the active compounds.

The traditional Asian method of extraction is hot-water extraction. Hot-water extraction helps to maximize the health benefits obtained from medicinal mushroom decoctions or supplements. Typically, mushrooms have to be simmered for extended periods, often for as long as 24 h, in order to obtain the benefits of the water-soluble compounds found in medicinal mushrooms. Simply making tea is not enough to release the therapeutic components; the process is more like making broth.

Simmering at temperatures ranging from 50 to 70 °C for several hours in order to make a concentrate is usually best for health benefits. Excessive heat must be avoided, as it can damage some of the bioactive molecules found in mushrooms. Without this hot-water extraction, the body cannot absorb the immune-active, water-soluble compounds.

In order to maximize the benefits of supplementation, outstanding supplements undergo hot-water extraction followed by evaporation, drying, and encapsulation. These extra steps add complexity and cost to the manufacturing process but maximize health benefits.





Although this method of preparation may be best for those looking for a standardized medicinal mushroom extract, incorporating more mushrooms in your everyday life is worthwhile, given they are often referred to as a superfood due to their many health benefits.

Mushrooms are available in a variety of formats—fresh, canned, dried, sliced, or in chunks. They are also available as ground-up mushroom powders; these can be used to add flavour to meals and soups. Mushrooms are often used as a meat replacement because of their umami or savoury flavour; the flavour is known to make a variety of foods more pleasant. Try fresh lion’s mane or maitake simply grilled in butter with garlic, or a miso soup with kombu and dried shiitake previously rehydrated: it’s priceless!

The nutritional benefits attributable to the protein, fibre, vitamin, and mineral content are available no matter the method of preparation. However, to release some of the soluble medicinal ingredients found in ground-up mushroom powders, it is best to add them to soups, stews, or other hot foods that are simmered for longer periods of time.

The immune benefits attributable to the water-soluble therapeutic compounds are more difficult to establish with dehydrated mushroom powders, but benefits are nonetheless expected, based on numerous studies showing that the dietary consumption of mushrooms alone improves health and immunity.

Dehydrated mushroom chunks or slices, from reishi or chaga for example, can be used to make tonic teas by simmering for 10–20 minutes but, again, decoctions in water for several hours are best.

In the Canadian food guide, mushrooms fall under vegetables and fruits although they are neither. They are a unique food that should be part of a healthy and varied diet. Mushrooms provide many healthy nutrients our body needs.

For those looking for specific health benefits, a standardized supplement obtained through a hot-water extraction offers the greatest therapeutic potential.

**“Variety’s the very spice of life, that gives it all its flavour.”**

—William Cowper (1731–1800)



**Dr. Ludovic Brunel, ND**

Dr. Brunel has 15+ years’ of experience as a naturopathic doctor and practices in Calgary. His approach has always been to improve health outcomes by relying on the best research available.

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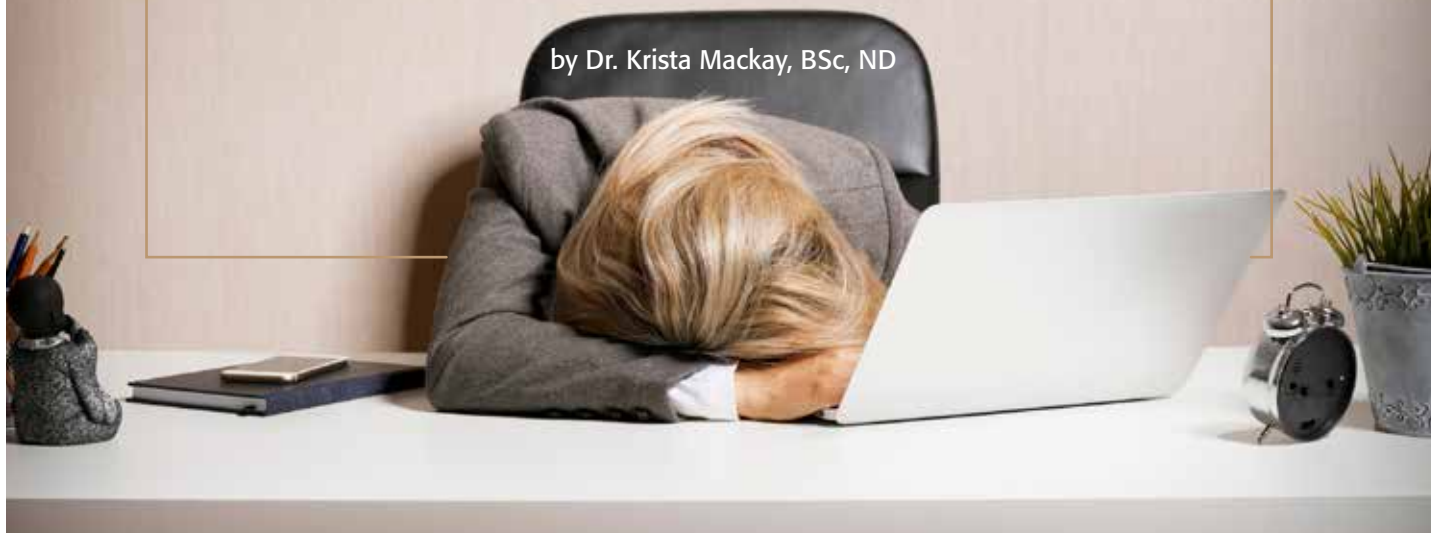


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# Recovering from a Burnout

by Dr. Krista Mackay, BSc, ND



Feeling run down, overwhelmed, tired, and burnt out? Maybe you are drinking more coffee or craving more sugar to keep going. Have you felt more moody and irritable, and less patient? When stress persists and is not managed, it can lead to a burnout. Secondary conditions could include depression; anxiety; insomnia; and cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, neurological, musculoskeletal, or hormonal problems. Check out my previous article “Signs and Symptoms You May Be Heading for a Burnout.” The question you probably want answered: “How do I recover?”

Current medication usually targets psychological or physical stress symptom. This may be helpful in some cases, but it doesn’t treat the whole person or the root cause of the imbalance. For example, antidepressants are often used because symptoms of burnout closely resemble those of depression.

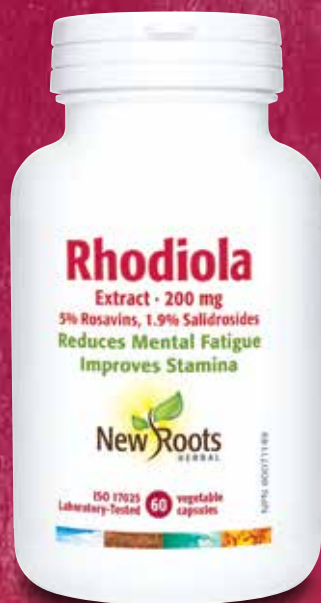
The problem is they don’t always help someone with a burnout feel better, and they often have uncomfortable side effects. Treatment plans focusing on the whole person are invaluable, as stress and burnout are multifactorial and present differently in each individual. Fatigue and exhaustion are key symptoms, but using stimulants such as sugar and caffeine are not the answer either: They push the adrenal glands to work harder. A healthy diet is crucial for this reason. Eating regular protein- and nutrient-dense foods help to balance blood sugar and support the function of the adrenal glands. Breathing and meditation remind the nervous system to stay calm. Gentle exercise, to tolerance, is also useful as a long-term solution for burnout. Lifestyle changes are essential, but I would like to focus on a fascinating category of medicinal plants called “adaptogens.”

## Adaptogens

The term “adaptogen” is used to describe the function of a medicinal plant to help us adapt. Adaptogenic plants have pharmacological components that increase mental and physical endurance and regulate homeostasis, all protecting against stress. They are balancers that help various systems within our bodies normalize. A meta-analysis showed that plant adaptogens could provide a number of benefits in the treatment of chronic fatigue, cognitive impairment, and immune protection. These plants contain compounds that help increase our endurance as well as our vitality (without stimulating) when we are feeling exhausted, and at the same time, these bioactive molecules can also provide a sense of calm and relaxation (without sedating) when the nervous system is too much on a hyperreactive mode, in case of anxiety or panic, for example. Let’s look at a few of these adaptogens.



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### *Rhodiola rosea*

Rhodiola helps to increase the body's resistance to stress by normalizing the release of stress hormones. In multiple clinical studies, the use of rhodiola helped improve mental-work capacity, attention, performance, and overall mood. One study using rhodiola showed significant improvements in stress symptoms, fatigue, quality of life, mood, and concentration. Effects were seen as early as three days after starting treatment and continued the whole 28-day duration of the study. Rhodiola has a lot of traditional and pharmacological evidence at improving mental performance and reducing fatigue. It also shows encouraging results with mild depression and anxiety, which often come alongside burnout.



### **Siberian Ginseng** (*Eleutherococcus senticosus*)

It is important to mention that there are a lot of ginsengs, each with their own unique set of constituents. Most ginsengs tend to have a stimulatory effect, such as *Panax ginseng*. This is not always beneficial in burnout, and definitely not recommended for long-term use. Siberian ginseng, or *Eleuthero*, differs considerably, both chemically and pharmacologically, due to its adaptogenic properties that help to normalize rather than stimulate. In a study on professional burnout, the group receiving *Eleuthero* showed significant improvements in scores related to burnout, depression, depersonalization, and task management versus placebo. This was seen after 12 weeks of supplementation.



## Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*)

Ashwagandha has been used for thousands of years and comes from Ayurveda (traditional Indian medicine). Modern scientific studies report incredible benefits of this plant with regards to stress and burnout. In a study on chronic stress, the group receiving ashwagandha showed a significant reduction in stress scores, and serum cortisol levels were substantially reduced compared to placebo. Another study looking at ashwagandha showed significant improvement in sleep quality in the group taking this extract. It goes on to say that ashwagandha was shown to be beneficial at reducing stress and anxiety. Ashwagandha is considered an adaptogen, but it has also been used traditionally to support sleep, (hence the name, *Withania somnifera*). It contains a natural compound with sleep-inducing potential and, when given daily in a study, it improved sleep quality and reduced the time it took for patients to fall asleep.

Overall stress and burnout are multifactorial and need to be supported with an integrative approach. Along with mindfulness, breathing, healthy nutrition, and exercise, adaptogenic plants show promising results for burnout recuperation. They deliver many constituents that work to regulate homeostasis via several mechanisms. Numerous clinical trials demonstrate that adaptogens show antifatigue, neuroprotective, antidepressive, anxiolytic, and central nervous system-stimulating activities. In any case, it's valuable to consult with a naturopathic doctor to get an individualized formula of adaptogens and a specific treatment plan.



**Dr. Krista Mackay, BSc, ND**

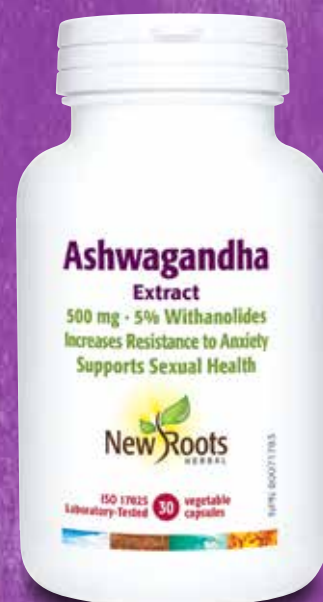
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# Show Your Heart *Some Love*

by Dr. Stephanie Ogura, ND



Long before February was declared “Heart Month” in Canada, the celebration of Valentine’s Day symbolized love. To keep you and your loved ones healthy, we continue raising awareness of the wide range of naturopathic interventions that promote all things related to the heart.

## *The Heart and the Cardiovascular System*

Cardiovascular health is evaluated with a variety of diagnostic tools that give us information on the integrity of the heart, blood, blood vessels, plaque accumulation, and blood-lipid profile. An impaired cardiovascular system could lead to a range of conditions including high blood pressure, atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), arrhythmia, heart attack, and stroke.

Heart health must be considered holistically. While genetic influences on cardiovascular health cannot be modified, lifestyle and natural medicine have been shown to improve cardiovascular outcomes. Let’s discuss some of the best-researched strategies for better cardiovascular health.

## *The Power of Lifestyle Modifications*

It’s well established that active living, following diets rich in healthy fats and fibre such as the Mediterranean diet, or following the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet can improve cardiovascular risk factors. Tobacco use is heavily related to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease; however, research has shown that smoking cessation at an early age (40 years) has an impressive 90% reduction in the excess risk of death (compared to not quitting).

The potential contributions of mood, sleep, and natural supplements on cardiovascular health are often overlooked. Recent clinical research illustrates the significant impact these modifications can have on cardiovascular health and wellbeing.

## *Mood*

Positive psychological outlook—including happiness, optimism, and gratitude—are independently linked to improved cardiovascular health. In a prospective study of 70,021 older women followed over eight years, women in the highest quartile of optimism had a 38% reduced risk of heart-disease mortality and a 39% reduced risk of stroke mortality.

Brief gratitude interventions (usually in the form of letters, journaling, and lists) and mindfulness meditation (such as the relaxation response) are recognized to improve subjective wellbeing and optimism and the cardiovascular system.

## *Sleep*

Our circadian clock (sleep/wake cycle) regulates cardiovascular functions including health of arterial lining, blood-clot formation, blood pressure, and heart rate. Chronic sleep disruption has been

associated with an increase in cardiovascular disease including atherosclerosis, heart failure, myocardial infarction, and arrhythmias. Short-term circadian misalignment (12 h inverted cycle for three days) has been shown to increase 24 h systolic blood pressure and diastolic blood pressure.

Consistent timing of sleep initiation and waking, sleeping in the dark, and other healthy sleep-hygiene practices could help prevent circadian disruption and their effect on the cardiovascular system.

## **Natural Supplements for Heart Health**

### **Fish Oils**

The most abundant sources of beneficial fatty acids are found in cold-water species such as sardines, herring, mackerel, salmon, and tuna. Eicosapentaenoic (EPA) and docosahexaenoic (DHA) fatty acids represent the bulk of clinical research. Omega-3 fatty acid supplementation has been demonstrated to improve cardiovascular measures and outcomes. Trials of 127,477 participants concluded that omega-3 supplementation lowers the risk of myocardial infarction, coronary heart disease (CHD) death, total CHD, cardiovascular disease (CVD) death, and total CVD. A review of fish-oil trials featuring over 135,000 participants concluded that EPA and DHA supplementation was associated with a statistically significant lower risk of CHD events and myocardial infarction. Each additional gram of EPA/DHA further displayed a significant risk reduction.

Current evidence from multiple studies suggest that a higher dose of omega-3 oils (2–4 g/d of combined EPA and DHA) appears to be safe and to reduce CVD events. Luckily, fish oil is available in convenient concentrated softgels. Choose one made from smaller fish to avoid potential contaminants, including heavy metals, which are common in larger species. Labels typically indicate EPA and DHA in milligrams; simply add them up to ensure you're getting the dosage you need.

### **Garlic**

Garlic is globally recognized for its cardiovascular benefits. The identification and isolation of the sulphur-containing compound allicin has led to a wealth of scientific research for the cardioprotective effect of garlic. Garlic has been proven to benefit cardiovascular status in two critical ways. It helps lower levels of harmful LDL cholesterol, a major indicator of coronary heart disease. It also inhibits platelet aggregation in the blood. In layman's terms, this refers to sticky blood that can contribute to heart attack or stroke. Worried about garlic breath? Odourless garlic is available in supplement form.

### **Resveratrol**

Resveratrol is a potent antioxidant compound present in peanuts, grapes, blueberries, cranberries, and cocoa. In supplement form, it's most often isolated from Japanese knotweed. Its antioxidant action benefits cardiac health along with blood-glucose management.

A study involving 71 individuals with new diagnosis of elevated harmful (LDL) cholesterol found that the individuals in the resveratrol group (100 mg/d) showed a significant decrease in total cholesterol and triglyceride concentrations.

Another trial involving 85 patients with coronary artery disease were prescribed standard therapy (*beta*-blocker, statin, aspirin) with 30 participants receiving an additional 100 mg/d resveratrol. After two months, blood volume significantly improved, by 9.7% in the resveratrol group compared to 3.2% of participants receiving standard therapy. Among other cardioprotective measures, the resveratrol group had significantly reduced numbers of premature atrial contractions and premature ventricular contractions. This translates to smoother, more efficient cardiac performance.

## **Conclusion**

Naturopathic approaches to heart health include many evidence-based approaches including diet, lifestyle modification, and natural-medicine supplementation. The inclusion of multiple interventions is the ideal way to address heart health from a holistic perspective. We could say this advice is well worth "Taking to heart"!



**Dr. Stephanie Ogura, BSc, ND**

Stephanie is a graduate of the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine and practices in Montreal, Quebec. With over 20 years of experience, she has a special interest in homeopathy, and relies on multiple naturopathic tools to address the whole person.

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# Fabulous Fungi

## The Immune Effects of Medicinal Mushrooms

by Dr. Colleen Hartwick, ND



With cold-and-flu season in full swing, it's essential to have an array of tools to support your immune system. Edible medicinal mushrooms have been traditionally used for health promotion and longevity in East Asian countries for centuries. The polysaccharides (complex carbohydrates) found in these fungi possess an array of health-promoting properties such as immunomodulation, antitumour, antiaging, and antioxidant effects. Before we take a deeper dive into the various species of medicinal mushrooms and their immune effects, you must first be assured that your medicinal mushrooms have been prepared in such a way as to provide you with the greatest health benefits. You see, the structure of mushrooms, unless properly prepared, renders these polysaccharides and their immune supportive effects inaccessible to us.

The immune effects of medicinal mushrooms are attributed to the presence of polysaccharides known as *beta*-glucans ( $\beta$ -glucans). Without proper preparation, these  $\beta$ -glucans are inaccessible as they are found embedded in the mushroom's cell walls, which are made from an incredibly tough, indigestible fibre known as chitin. Chitin is the same substance from which the shells of crustaceans are made of, which—for those of you who have not tried to eat a lobster shell—is incredibly difficult to break down.

Hot-water extraction (as a tea or decoction) is the traditional preparation of medicinal mushrooms and the only clinically validated method for breaking these polysaccharides out of the indigestible cell walls.

Why hot-water extraction? Hot-water extraction dissolves chitin, and once the water (and chitin) is removed, the  $\beta$ -glucans are liberated and able to exert their health effects, which can be amplified through concentration.

Once your medicinal mushrooms have undergone hot-water extraction, the question is: Which mushroom to choose? Let's take a closer look at the most common medicinal mushrooms and their immune effects.

### Shiitake (*Lentinula edodes*)

Shiitake is a culinary medicinal mushroom with its origins in Asian cuisine. Rich in lentinan, a  $\beta$ -glucan, shiitake has shown the ability to modulate the immune system—through affecting T cells, a category of cells important to fight viral infections and cancer. Lentinan was shown to reduce allergic reactions, to have anticancer effects, and to improve health outcomes in people with HIV. The anticancer effects of shiitake appear to be the result of accelerating the rate of cell death (known as apoptosis)

in breast cancer as well as myeloma (bone-marrow cancer). Shiitake has also been shown to reduce inflammation and to upregulate secretory immunoglobulin A (IgA), therefore improving the immune function in the digestive tract. It also appears to modify the composition of the gut microbiome—a major site for our immune system.



## Maitake

(*Grifola frondosa*)

Maitake's main immune-modifying effects have been attributed to  $\beta$ -1,3-glucan and  $\beta$ -1,6-glucan. These have been shown to enhance the functioning of several different categories of immune cells, including macrophages as well as T and NK cells, and to augment antibody production. Through increasing T- and NK-cell numbers, maitake has demonstrated anticancer effects in patients with lung, liver, and breast cancers. Additionally, maitake is showing promising results in its anticancer effects against prostate cancer, by increasing the rate of cell death for prostate-cancer cells. And much like shiitake, maitake has also demonstrated improved health outcomes in the form of a raised CD4<sup>+</sup> (aka T-helper cells that contribute directly to viral clearance, among other functions) count for people diagnosed with HIV.

## Chaga

(*Inonotus obliquus*)

Chaga is a parasitic fungus that grows commonly on birch trees. Chaga's main immune-supporting effects are due to the presence of both  $\beta$ -glucans and botulin. Hot-water extracts of chaga have been shown to reduce markers of inflammation including TNF-*alpha* that are implicated in a variety of autoimmune conditions. Chaga has been shown to increase production of immune cells—including macrophages, eosinophils, neutrophils, and basophils—that were suppressed from chemotherapy. Aside from improving immune health among the immunocompromised, chaga has shown antiviral effects against a range of viruses including herpes simplex virus-1 (HSV-1) by preventing it from fusing with and infecting host cells. Additional antiviral effects have been demonstrated against HPV as well as HIV. Like its fellow medicinal mushrooms, chaga was also shown to slow the growth of colon-, breast-, lung-, and brain-cancer cells.

## Reishi

(*Ganoderma lucidum*)

Reishi—the Japanese word for “mushroom of immortality”—has a long history of use for immune support. Reishi, like other medicinal mushrooms, is well known for its antiviral and antitumour effects. Through increasing activity of tumour-suppressing NK and T cells, reishi has shown positive outcomes in the treatment of breast, lung, and colorectal cancers. Its antiviral effects have been demonstrated most clearly in the accelerated relief in symptoms of recurring genital herpes.



## Turkey Tail

(*Coriolus versicolor*)

The active constituents in coriolus have been identified as proteoglycans with a  $\beta$ -1,4-glucan structure. Polysaccharides from coriolus have been shown to have an adjuvant effect when combined with other anticancer treatments including increasing NK-cell function as well as neutrophils and T-cell counts. Coriolus has mostly been used as an adjunct therapy in the treatment of lung, stomach, esophageal, colorectal, and breast cancers.



## Cordyceps

Also known as caterpillar fungus, wild cordyceps (*Cordyceps sinensis*) is not found growing on trees as its fellow fungi are, but it is rather found growing on an insect host. Nowadays, they come from farms growing similar species like *Cordyceps militaris* or *Paecilomyces hepiali*. The active constituents in cordyceps include  $\beta$ -1,3-glucan and  $\beta$ -1,6-glucan. Cordyceps plays a role in increasing several immune-cell types including helper T cells and NK cells. Thus far, cordyceps' strongest immune effect comes in the form of increasing lifespan in patients with liver cancer.

When it comes to selecting a medicinal-mushroom product, there are two key considerations that we have reviewed. First is whether your mushrooms have been prepared as a hot-water extraction so that you can garner the greatest immune-enhancing effects of these fantastic fungi. Second is what species of medicinal mushroom to use—which ultimately boils down (pun intended) to the desired immune outcome you seek which, of course, should be discussed with your health-care practitioner.



**Dr. Colleen Hartwick, ND**

Dr. Colleen Hartwick is a licensed naturopathic physician practising on North Vancouver Island, BC, with a special interest in trauma as it plays a role in disease.

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# Zinc

## A Solution to Assist the Fight Against Viral Infections

by Guillaume Landry, MS, Naturopath

Among the various plants and nutraceuticals under the spotlight during these pandemic times—such as elderberry, vitamin D, quercetin, and *N*-acetylcysteine, among others—there is zinc, which is considered an essential mineral for the immune system. Its popularity is due to the fact that it helps reinforce the body's natural defenses, including during an infection. Actually, by contributing to the augmentation of the number of lymphocytes—white blood cells capable of destroying the cells known to be infected—zinc can prevent the growth of some viruses, such as influenza or *Herpes simplex*.

A recent systematic review and meta-analysis including 28 randomized placebo-controlled

trials and 5,446 participants confirmed the preventive and curative effects of zinc on acute upper respiratory infections (URI) in adults. At the end of the study, it was established that the prophylactic (preventive) use of zinc reduced the risk of developing an URI-associated disease (oral or intranasal administration of zinc prevented an average of 5 URI for 100 persons per month). Used as a treatment against URI, zinc shortened the duration of symptoms by two days on average, and it significantly reduced their severity on day 3.

While this study included a cohort of people not susceptible to zinc deficiency, it is important to note that this issue affects nearly 30% of the elderly population and potentially strict vegetarians; pregnant women; as well as individuals suffering from alcoholism, kidney disorders, or gastrointestinal malabsorption. These populations are therefore naturally more likely to reap the benefits of zinc which, beyond its immune effects, also contributes to healthy cellular function, healthy skin and tissues, hormonal balance, and fertility, as well as to the prevention of degenerative diseases as a result of its major role as an antioxidant.

However, as with any other active substance, whether allopathic or natural, it is essential to follow the appropriate guidelines and to not exceed the recommended dosage, as an excessive intake of zinc can be toxic. To make sure you are using zinc appropriately, it is always highly recommended to consult a naturopathic doctor.

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# YOU CAN DO MORE WHEN YOU HAVE STRONG BONES



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# Combating Winter Aches, Pains, and Injuries

by Dr. Kaitlyn Richardson, ND, HbSc

As the temperature outside starts to drop, the chance of snow, ice, and slippery conditions increases dramatically. Unfortunately, with these imminent winter conditions comes the increased risk of slips and falls, which cause aches, pains, and joint injuries. The good news is that these injuries can be prevented, and there are natural therapies that can aid in healing and decreasing joint pain!

The famous quote by Benjamin Franklin, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” is more applicable than ever right now. Preventing pain and injuries in the first place saves us all a lot of pain and rehabilitation time. The easiest way to protect yourself from injury as you get back into physical activity is to ease-in slowly. Don’t expect to be where you were two years ago, so give your muscles and joints a chance to slowly adapt to being active again with a good warm-up and plenty of stretching.

Of course, we cannot prevent every injury from happening, and this is where natural therapies that will support our bodies’ own healing process come in handy.

## Diet and Lifestyle

Usually, ice is the first thing that we reach for when our joints flare up or we injure ourselves. While ice can be a great tool for reducing pain after an injury, other important lifestyle factors are often overlooked. One of the first aspects I discuss with patients is their protein intake, because insufficient intake can result in slower wound healing and longer recovery time for working muscles. It is important to maintain healthy muscles because they help to keep our joints in line to prevent joint damage or further breakdown in osteoarthritis. The recommended daily allowance (RDA) for protein is set at 0.8 g/kg/d, which means you should

eat 0.8 grams of protein for every kilogram of your body weight. Often, athletes or those healing from injury will need to increase how much protein they are consuming, but this is best discussed with a trusted health-care practitioner. Enjoying plenty of fruits and vegetables is also an important dietary consideration for joint pain and injury, as these foods are filled with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Vitamin C has been shown to prevent the progression of osteoarthritis through its antioxidant action.

Research also supports the use of some natural herbs and supplements such as curcumin, boswellia, bromelain, collagen, and natural eggshell membrane for healing arthritis and joint injuries. Most of these substances focus on decreasing inflammation, which makes them useful for acute or chronic joint injuries.

## Curcumin

Curcumin is an active component of the spice turmeric and has a characteristic yellow colour. It is known for its anti-inflammatory properties, but also appears to possess antioxidant and anticatabolic (reduces the breakdown of muscle tissue) properties. This means that not only curcumin helps control inflammation and therefore pain, but it can also protect against muscle breakdown during injury recovery. Curcumin is not readily absorbed in the human body, so it is often combined with substances such as piperine—from black pepper—which has been shown to enhance the reduction of pain by improving curcumin absorption.



## Boswellia

The resin of *Boswellia serrata*—or Indian frankincense by its common name—has been traditionally used for centuries to help treat many chronic diseases. One study found that Boswellia extract was very effective for reducing pain and improving function of the knee joint in as little as seven days. Another study found similar outcomes in other joints, but the improvements became noticeable after four weeks. Boswellia can be a great herbal addition to both acute injuries and to prevent long-term osteoarthritis flares, like the ones experienced after abruptly returning to exercise.

## Bromelain

Bromelain is another plant-derived powerhouse enzyme; it comes from the stems of pineapples. Many studies have looked into the effectiveness of bromelain for joint health and injury. Of note, it has been shown that bromelain can reduce both pain and stiffness in people suffering from osteoarthritis, but also in those who are otherwise healthy but suffering from knee pain or acute injury. Aside from anti-inflammatory and analgesic (pain-relieving) properties, bromelain was also shown to be anti-oedematous, which means that it can help to relieve that pesky swelling that comes with injuries.



**Dr. Kaitlyn Richardson, ND, HbSc**

A naturopathic doctor in Milton, Ontario, with a clinical focus in sports and performance medicine. She believes in using individualized, holistic, and evidence-based strategies to help active individuals feel and perform their best. [drkaitlynrichardson.com](http://drkaitlynrichardson.com)

## Collagen

We know that collagen is broken down in joints with osteoarthritis, but there is evidence that collagen is degraded in our joints immediately after an injury and that this breakdown could continue in the long term. Collagen is essential for healthy joints, and studies now show that taking collagen orally results in less pain in those with osteoarthritis or those who are experiencing joint pain due to exercise.

## Natural Eggshell Membrane

Natural eggshell membrane (NEM) has been shown in multiple studies to produce long-lasting pain relief and improved quality of life, especially in those experiencing an osteoarthritis flare. Results were seen in as little as seven days, with the maximum pain relief being experienced at three weeks. It also appears that the effects of NEM can last for up to 90 days, which is just enough time for a sedentary body to get back into physical activity.

## Conclusion

Adding natural supplements while also ensuring a well-rounded, healthy diet and proper hydration can help relieve acute joint injury, ease an osteoarthritis flare, and even prevent you from feeling joint pain in the first place as you get back into the gym or your sport of choice.

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# Seasonal Affective Disorder:

## “Beating the Winter Blues”

by Dr. Katie DeGroot, BSc, ND, MScN

Late fall and winter can be a mentally challenging time of year for many Canadians: The weather gets colder, the days get shorter, and people spend less time outside. It is estimated that up to 15% of the population experiences “winter blues”—brief periods of feeling down, with low energy, a reduced desire to engage in social activities, and possibly an increased need for sleep. For most, these blues are transitory, but for others—about 3% of Canadians—they experience a winter-long condition called seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

Seasonal affective disorder is a type of depression that occurs in a seasonal pattern, usually beginning in the fall or winter, worsening as the days get shorter, and then improving or completely resolving as spring approaches and the days get longer. Seasonal affective disorder more commonly affects people who live in areas with long or severe winters, with incidence rates rising with higher latitude—increasing distance north or south from the equator.

The exact etiology of SAD is unknown, but it is thought to be associated with season-related changes in light exposure. Thus, the number-one treatment for SAD is “bright-light” or “photo” therapy. This is typically completed at home using a special light that emits short- to medium-wavelength light at 2,500 to 10,000 lux, placed 30 to 60 cm away from the face for 30 to 60 minutes every day.

As SAD is associated with diminished sunlight exposure and often improves with phototherapy (about 66% of cases), it has been theorized that SAD may in part be associated with lowered vitamin D levels. Vitamin D, also known as the “sunshine vitamin,” is created in the skin when it is exposed to ultraviolet light from the sun. A few studies have looked at the effect of supplementing both high- and low-dose vitamin D in folks affected by SAD, with relatively positive results: An improved vitamin D status was significantly associated with symptom improvements.

More broadly, the role of vitamin D in nonseasonal depression has been well-studied, with research suggesting low levels are associated with more severe depressive symptoms, and that vitamin D supplementation—when levels are low—improves mental-health symptoms overall. Given that Statistics Canada estimates up to 40% of Canadians have lower-than-ideal vitamin D levels in the wintertime, and that low vitamin D is associated with lowered mental health in general, supplementation of vitamin D may be beneficial for wintertime mood support.

Another nutrient class thought to influence the occurrence of SAD are omega-3 fatty acids, specifically eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosapentaenoic acid (DHA). These are two types of omega-3 fatty acids that our body needs to function optimally but cannot make on its own. Thus, EPA and DHA must be obtained from external sources, i.e., from food or supplements.



As food groups go, fish and seafood tend to have the highest amount of EPA and DHA per serving size. However, not all types of fish and seafood are equally high in EPA and DHA; some contain a little while others contain a lot. The options highest in EPA and DHA (averaging at least 1 g of EPA and DHA per 75 g serving) are salted mackerel (3.43 g), caviar (1.96 g), herring (1.6 g), canned anchovies (1.54 g), raw or cooked Atlantic or Chinook salmon (1.31–1.77 g), and cooked Pacific oysters (1.04 g). Other fish/seafood containing between 0.4 and 1 g of EPA/DHA per 75 g serving include raw or cooked Sockeye (0.87–0.93 g) and Coho salmon (0.8–1.08 g); cooked Pacific cod (0.79 g); cooked Arctic char (0.68 g); canned white tuna (0.65 g); cooked mussels (0.59 g); cooked carp (0.56 g); raw, cooked, or canned Pink salmon (0.46–1.27 g); and cooked pollock (0.40 g).

Population studies suggest countries with high per-capita fish intake have significantly lower rates of SAD compared to other countries at similar latitudes with lower per-capita fish intake. Dieticians of Canada recommend Canadians consume two servings of fish per week, averaging between 300 and 450 mg of combined EPA and DHA per day, or 2,100 to 3,150 mg per week.

However, many studies suggest that EPA may be more beneficial than DHA in supporting mental health and reducing depressive symptoms, with an average EPA intake of 1,000 to 2,000 mg per day showing the most benefit. As you can tell from the above list of fish/seafood by omega-3 content, this would require consuming a lot of fish every day! Fortunately, high-EPA fish-oil supplements make it easy and cost-effective to achieve the suggested daily dose.

In other words: Increased omega-3 fatty acid consumption, especially EPA from fish and/or high-EPA fish oil, has been associated with reduced rates of seasonal mood disorders. Furthermore, numerous studies suggest that a high omega-3 fatty acid intake from food and supplements is beneficial to improve mental health and is associated with lower levels of depression overall.

So, if the winter blues get you down this year, take it easy, be kind to yourself, and know that it should not last long. Try eating some fish, discuss high-EPA and vitamin D supplementation with your doctor or pharmacist, and seek as much sunlight as you can. Some other ideas that may help support mood and reduce the “winter blues” include acupuncture, massage therapy, yoga, essential oils (aromatherapy), counselling, and music therapy. But if you find yourself struggling or feeling down for more than a few days, don’t hesitate to reach out for help and support—the Canadian Mental Health Association ([cmha.ca](http://cmha.ca)), Wellness Together ([wellnesstogether.ca](http://wellnesstogether.ca)), or your family physician are all good places to start. No matter how you’re feeling, you are not alone.



#### **Dr. Katie DeGroot, BSc, ND, MScN**

Dr. DeGroot is an Alberta-registered naturopathic doctor who also holds a Master of Science in Nutrition. She offers nutritionally focused care and has a special interest in digestive issues and supportive mental health-care. [drkatiedegroot.ca](http://drkatiedegroot.ca)

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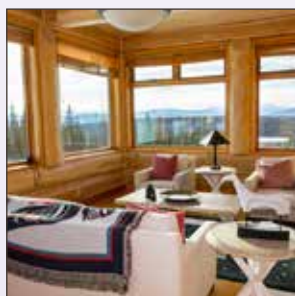
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# Thinning Hair and Hair Loss

## Answers for Women and Men

by Andrea Donsky, RHN

Thinning hair and hair loss are no fun for either sex, and they are common in both. In fact, here are a few statistics that we hope won't scare the hair right out of your roots:

- Male-pattern baldness (androgenic alopecia) is responsible for about 95% of hair loss in men
- About two-thirds of men will experience some hair loss by age 35
- About half of women start losing their hair by age 50
- Thirty-nine percent (29%) of women with hair loss have two key symptoms of depression
- People can begin to lose their hair as young as 15 or 16 years old

Now that we have your attention, let's first dive into the life of a hair; then we'll look at why hair loss and thinning hair happen, and what you can do about it.

## Why Is My Hair Thinning or Falling Out?

Genetics plays a significant role in whether you will experience thinning hair and hair loss. Check out everyone at your next family gathering! Numerous other factors also play a role, including the following:

- Use of harsh hair products—such as dyes, sprays, relaxers, perms, and gels—can damage your hair.
- Low intake of proteins, vitamins especially B9 and biotin, iron, and other minerals like silica can contribute to hair loss.
- Some hair styles can cause thinning hair, such as tight braids and buns.
- Conversely, excessive levels of vitamins A and E and selenium can cause hair thinning and loss. However, selenium in right quantities supports a healthy thyroid gland, which in turn promotes healthy hair.

Chronic or uncontrolled acute stress can elevate stress hormone levels and have a negative impact on hair growth. In a study, researchers found that a stress hormone in mice (corticosterone) interfered with stem cells required for hair growth in these animals. In humans, the equivalent hormone is cortisol.

Health conditions such as immune-system deficiencies, autoimmune-disease treatments, losing more than 20 pounds quickly, recently giving birth, hormonal fluctuations (e.g., menopause, pregnancy), high fever, skin infections, eating disorders, and stopping birth-control medication can all contribute to thinning hair or hair loss.

However, none of this means you can't hold onto your hair, reduce hair loss and thinning, and even restore some of your lost locks.

## Natural Supplements

Various nutraceuticals have been shown to be beneficial for thinning hair and loss, especially in case of nutritional deficiencies

which are often mentioned. Researchers note, however, that among people who don't have specific nutritional deficiencies, "supplementation may actually prove harmful to hair," and that "over-supplementation of certain nutrients, including selenium, vitamins A and E, has actually been linked to hair loss." That's why it's important to follow the directions on the bottle when it comes to supplementation, and in this case to promoting hair growth and retention.

Both women and men can take on the challenge of thinning hair by turning to natural products. Hereafter are candidates that you may consider:

- **Silica:** A nutrient that is the third most abundant trace mineral in the body. A study of 50 women given 10 mg orthosilicic acid per day for 20 weeks found increased hair-shaft thickness and improved strength, including elasticity and break load.
- **Biotin:** Biotin is a water-soluble essential nutrient associated with the B-vitamin family. It has been used for decades for improving the health of hair, as well as skin and nails.
- **Saw Palmetto:** It is an herb that may prevent testosterone from breaking down, which can help prevent hair loss.



- **Pumpkin Seed Oil:** It could block testosterone from transforming into dihydrotestosterone (DHT), a hormone associated with hair loss. Research shows that men who took pumpkin seed oil daily for six months saw a 40% increase in hair count!
- **Evening Primrose:** It is a rich source of linolenic acid (LA) and *gamma*-linolenic acid (GLA), which may help with hair growth.
- **Grapeseed Oil:** This is another option to include easily in your cooking or supplementation as it is a source of linolenic acid, vitamin E, and flavonoids which help with hair growth.
- **Flaxseed:** Either freshly grounded or in the form of oil, it is a natural source of vitamin E and omega-3s, which promote hair growth.
- **Fish Oil (Omega-3s):** These fatty acids are some of the most-researched anti-inflammatory agents, important to consider as inflammation can be an underlying contributor to hair loss.
- **Green Tea:** This classic and subtle tea delivers high amounts of catechins (especially EGCG) that help lower levels of DHT and thus prevent shrinking of hair follicles.
- **Folate/Folic Acid:** Also known as vitamin B9, it helps with new-cell generation. Folic acid is believed to help hair follicles produce new hair.
- **Vitamin D:** Low levels may be associated with female pattern baldness, according to some studies.

These natural nutrients and herbs have been shown to help support hair health in both men and women. For the best quality, visit a health-food store in your community. Specialty stores tend to carry a better selection of natural supplements and vitamins, and offer reputable hair-and-scalp-support formulas. Developed using proven ingredients in studied concentrations, they work synergistically to provide you with healthier, stronger hair. Don't let thinning hair and hair loss get you down.



**Andrea Donsky, RHN**

Andrea Donsky is a registered holistic nutritionist and founder of NaturallySavvy.com—a multiple award-winning website. She has 21 years of experience in the health and wellness space, and is a multiple award-winning influencer. Her newest venture, [wearmorphus.com](http://wearmorphus.com), helps women in perimenopause and menopause. Follow Andrea on TikTok and Instagram @andreadonsky.

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# Eight Hidden Sugar Food Traps

by Angela Wallace, MSc, RD



Sugar tastes wonderful to most and is actually needed by our bodies to create energy. Sugars occur naturally in foods such as fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and grains. Whole-food sources that contain natural sugars often come with other nutrients such as fibre, antioxidants, minerals, and vitamins. However, not all sugars are created equal. Added sugars are often added to packaged products to enhance flavour. The real problem is that excess sugar intake, regardless of what type of sugar it's coming from, can contribute to overall health and weight. Excess sugar intake (especially from added sugars) has been linked to weight gain, increased risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and other chronic health conditions. Excess sugar intake has also been linked to accelerated aging.

Canadians consume an average of 67 g of added or free sugars per day and 106 g of total sugars. In both adults and children, the World Health Organization recommends reducing intake of free sugars to 10% of total energy intake. In an average 2,000 kcal diet, that would mean a maximum of 50 g of added sugars each day, with ideal amounts being much less. Bottom line: Many of us are consuming more sugar than we should. If you are trying to reduce your sugar intake, you need to better understand just how much you are consuming each day. One of the main reasons you might overconsume sugar is because of “sugar traps” or hidden sugars. These traps create the illusion that what we are consuming is healthy, while the sugars quickly add up. If you are looking to improve your health this new year, lose weight, or better manage your blood sugars, here are eight sugar traps you should try to limit or avoid.



## Yogurt

Yogurt can make for a healthy snack or meal option. Plain yogurts will have naturally occurring sugars, with up to 10 g of sugar per cup. However, this amount gets even higher with flavoured yogurts. For example, a strawberry-flavoured yogurt will have more than 20 g of sugar per cup. Be careful with low-fat yogurts as well; often, the removal of fat will increase the amount of added sugars.

**Tip:** Try to opt for plain yogurts and add your own fruit to it instead.

## Salad Dressings

Salads are a convenient way to get a variety of vegetables into your diet. However, prepared salad dressings can be a big sugar culprit, as they are often loaded with added sugars. This is part of the reason salads can seem so tasty. For example, a kale

salad with a bottled poppy-seed dressing can contain more than 20 g of sugar in a typical serving of 1–2 cups of salad.

**Tip:** Try making your own salad dressing more often. Adding just a teaspoon of honey will sweeten your salad dressing but only add 5 g of sugar.

## Condiments and Premade Sauces

These sauces—such as ketchup, BBQ sauce, teriyaki sauce, sweet-and-sour sauces, etc.—can be major sugar traps, because they often contain a lot of added sugars in a small amount (1–2 tablespoons). For example, ketchup contains 4 g of sugar per tablespoon and BBQ sauce about 7 g, which can easily add up when marinating chicken.

**Tip:** Choose condiments with lower amounts of sugar. Be mindful of how much sugar you are using. Try adding flavour to your meals with herbs and spices instead of sauces.

## Premade Smoothies

Similar to salads, smoothies can be an easy and delicious way to get in your fruit and veggies each day. I personally love smoothies, but they can often be filled with fruit and fruit juices. Although fruit is a source of natural sugar, the amount of it you consume in smoothies can be a lot, especially when there are multiple different fruits and juices involved. Sure, they taste delicious and healthy, but having something like this daily can be a major source of



hidden sugars working against your health goals. For example, a regular-sized smoothie made at a smoothie shop can often have more than 50 g of sugar.

**Tip:** Try making your own smoothies more often. Smoothies are a great way to get your veggies and fruits in. Making a smoothie at home can be a way to control how much sugar you are intaking while still getting the benefit of eating more fruits and veggies. You can even choose to include more low-sugar fruits (see more on that below).

**Try:** My green refresh smoothie (see [flourishbodyandmind.com](http://flourishbodyandmind.com)).

## Coffee and Specialty Drinks

I do a lot of work with weight management, and one of the first things I focus on is swapping drinking calories for eating calories. It is very easy for calories (and sugar) to add up when we drink them—the problem is you often don't feel satiated after drinking. Something like a specialty coffee with caramel sauce or iced coffee will taste delicious but certainly won't leave you feeling full, as if you just ate a snack or small meal. For example, most regular iced coffees can contain upwards of 30 g of added sugars, and a caramel coffee latte can be the same or more.

Even adding 1–2 teaspoons of sugar to your coffee contributes to 5–10 g of added sugars, and if you are having more than one coffee a day, it can quickly add up.

**Tip:** Save your specialty coffee drinks as a treat. If you do drink coffee with sugar, consider a way you can slowly reduce the amount of sugar you use and still enjoy your coffee. Remember: It takes time for your taste buds to adjust, so start slowly.

## High-Sugar Fruits

Fruits are a great source of fibre, vitamins, and antioxidants. I truly believe we should all eat and enjoy fruit—after all, fruit is nature's candy. That being said, if you are trying to watch your sugar intake for whatever reason, you may want to limit the amount of high-sugar fruit you consume. That might mean sticking to one high-sugar fruit each day

or keeping the portion controlled at  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup full. If you are using fruit to make smoothies, try to keep to using only one high-sugar fruit at a max of  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup, and using some veggies or another low-sugar fruit to make up the rest.

See the chart below for examples of low-, moderate-, and high-sugar fruits.

| Low-Sugar Fruits                                                                                                                                                                                           | Moderate-Sugar Fruits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | High-Sugar Fruits                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raspberries (5 g per cup)</li> <li>• Strawberries and blackberries (7 g per cup)</li> <li>• Kiwi (6 g per fruit)</li> <li>• Grapefruit (9 g per fruit)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oranges (12 g per fruit)</li> <li>• Peaches (12 g per fruit)</li> <li>• Watermelon (10 g per cup)</li> <li>• Cantaloupe (12 g per cup)</li> <li>• Small apple (15 g per apple)</li> <li>• Small pear (14 g per fruit)</li> <li>• Medium banana (14 g per fruit)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passionfruit (24 g per cup)</li> <li>• Pomegranate seeds (24 g per cup)</li> <li>• Mangoes (23 g per cup)</li> <li>• Cherries (20 g per cup)</li> <li>• Grapes (15 g per cup)</li> </ul> |

\*All sugar amounts are approximate amounts.

Keep in mind the amount of sugar you get from fruit really depends on the amount eaten. For example, watermelon can be high in sugar if eating 3–4 cups of it (which I know I can easily do), but it can be moderate if only eating 1 cup.

## High-Sugar Vegetables

Similar to fruits, there are vegetables (mainly your starchy/root vegetables) that are higher in sugar as well. In Canada over the winter months, a lot of what is available locally and seasonally are root vegetables, and they are great sources of nutrition. However, if you are watching your sugar intake, you will want to ensure your plate isn't filled with high-sugar veggies at each meal and be mindful of the portion size of these veggies.

**Tip:** Keep starchy or high-sugar veggies to a smaller portion, or pair that cup of corn with another veggie that isn't as high in sugar to help fill your plate (and belly) with good nutrition and veggies.



**Angela Wallace, MSc, RD**

A registered dietitian with the College of Dietitians of Ontario, personal trainer, and family-food expert who specializes in women and child nutrition and fitness, she loves helping families get healthy together. [eatrightfeelright.ca](http://eatrightfeelright.ca)

## High-Sugar Veggie Examples

- Corn
- Onions
- Beets
- Carrots
- Squashes
- Peas

## Dry Fruits

Dry fruits can be a great addition to salads, yogurt, and trail mix. The drying process also makes them super sweet and delicious.

Dry fruits can be a great way to curb your sweet tooth in a way that is “healthier,” as the sugars are coming from natural sources. What you want to be mindful of is how much dried fruit you are consuming. A small amount can quickly add up to a lot of extra sugar. For example, in just  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of raisins, you are getting more than 40 g of sugar (much more than you would get in  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of whole grapes).

**Tip:** If you enjoy dried fruit, try to keep to 1–2 pieces (e.g., 2 dried apricots) or  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup raisins. Also, read the label: Some dried fruit will contain added sugars (this is often the case for cranberries), so try to choose dried fruits with no sugars added. Choose fresh fruit over dried fruit on most days.



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# Coconut Whipping Cream

## Ingredient

- 1 can of coconut cream or coconut milk

## Instructions

Refrigerate can for 12+ hours (do not freeze).

Drain (clear) liquid; scoop hardened (white) cream into mixing bowl.

Whip well with eggbeater or mechanical/stand mixer until peaks form.

If not served immediately, store in fridge.



# One-Mug Hot Chocolate

## Dry Ingredients

- 2 tbsp. cocoa powder
- 1-2 tbsp. sugar, syrup, or sweetener of choice (or to taste)
- Pinch of salt (optional)

## Wet Ingredients

- 1 cup milk of choice
- ¼ tsp. vanilla extract

## Instructions

Mix dry ingredients together in mug.

Heat milk (do not boil), add vanilla, and pour into mug.

Mix well and enjoy!



### Dr. Katie DeGroot, BSc, ND, MScN

Dr. DeGroot is an Alberta-registered naturopathic doctor who also holds a Master of Science in Nutrition. She offers nutritionally focused care and has a special interest in digestive issues and supportive mental health-care.

[drkatiedegroot.ca](http://drkatiedegroot.ca)



# Mushroom Coffee Cake

Enjoy some classic coffee cake with some added focus with the support of the mighty lion's mane mushroom. Incorporating this functional mushroom into your diet is a great way to increase antioxidants, boost concentration, and improve memory.

## Cake Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- 2 cups coconut flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup tapioca flour
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup coconut sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup coconut oil or grass-fed butter
- 4 tbsp. organic coffee
- 2 tbsp. unsweetened coconut milk, at room temperature
- 1 tbsp. baking powder
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. New Roots Herbal's Lion's Mane Powder

## Cake Instructions

In a large mixing bowl, begin whisking the eggs, coconut milk, vanilla extract, coconut oil or grass fed butter, liquid coffee, and coconut sugar.

Add in the coconut flour, tapioca flour, baking powder, and Lion's Mane Powder. Mix batter and place in a baking dish lined with parchment paper.

## Crumb Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup rolled oats
- 3 tbsp. coconut sugar
- 2 tbsp. melted coconut oil or grass fed butter
- 2 tsp. cacao powder
- 1 tsp. New Roots Herbal's Lion's Mane Powder
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. vanilla extract

## Crumb Instructions

In a small mixing bowl, gather all ingredients from the list and blend well until crumbly texture.

Put the topping evenly over the cake and bake for 30–35 minutes in a preheated oven at 350 °F (177 °C).



**Megan Luder, CNP**

A certified nutritional practitioner who is passionate about creating and educating on the health benefits of nutrient-dense whole food!

[libertynourished.com](http://libertynourished.com)



# Chicken Broth

## *Flourish Original Recipe*

Whether you're battling a cold or flu, a cup of soothing chicken broth can't be beat. This recipe is easy, economical, and delicious. It's also much healthier for you because of all the iron, collagen, and vitamin-rich marrow from the bones. I freeze it in smaller quantities, and use it for any recipe calling for chicken stock, as well as a base for most soups I make.

When making a large quantity of broth, I'll pick up chicken backs from my local butcher, who gladly gives them to me rather than throwing them away. Otherwise, I use whatever bones remain after deboning chicken breast or full chickens.

### Ingredients

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- 2 pounds raw chicken backs or bones (backbone, wings, thigh, and drumstick bones with most meat removed)
- 3 large carrots
- 1 large yellow onion
- 2 stalks of celery
- 2–3 springs each of fresh oregano, thyme, rosemary, and Italian parsley (or about ½ tsp. dried)
- 1 tbsp. salt (or to taste)

### Equipment Needed

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- Pot large enough to fit 6 litres of water (all the ingredients need to fit in 75% of its depth)
- Large stainless steel strainer and deep glass bowl for the strainer to rest on

### Instructions

---

Clean vegetables. Keep carrots uncut.

Place the chicken into a large pot and cover with water (at least 2.5 cm [1"] over the bones). Cover and bring up to a boil. Reduce to a slow simmer, skimming the foam as it rises to the surface. When foaming subsides, add all remaining ingredients. Simmer for an hour, then pull out the carrots and set aside (I keep the carrots and use them as a veggie side dish). Keep covered and simmer on low for another 1–2 hours. The longer you cook it, the richer it becomes. Fair warning: It will not look very appealing at this point.

Rest the strainer on the glass bowl and fill it up using a ladle. Let the broth drain out, and put the remnants into compost or garbage (you've boiled all the goodness out of it). Transfer the broth to a larger bowl, and repeat until you've strained it all and have nothing but rich broth.

You can use it immediately or freeze in small portions to use when needed. If freezing, let it cool down, then transfer into measured plastic containers. Don't forget to label them with dates!

# Big Thanks from the David Suzuki Foundation

New Roots Herbal is passionate about the tireless efforts of the many charitable organizations they support through their Choose to Care program.

The David Suzuki Foundation (DSF) is among them; their work elevates awareness of environmental issues at the grass roots, federal, and global stage.

Here's a letter we received from DSF highlighting some of their victories in helping make Canada a leader on the world stage of environmental accountability.



DAVID SUZUKI  
FOUNDATION  
One nature.

FONDATION  
DAVID SUZUKI  
Un monde. Une nature.

davidsuzuki.org

*Dear Peter & New Roots Herbal Team,*

*It's been a difficult year for everyone due to COVID-19. Despite the devastation caused by this pandemic, humanity focused on what's essential - family, friends, community and nature. And with the enduring support of donors like you, we were able to contribute to some long-fought victories in Canada, including:*

- A Supreme Court win upholding the federal government's authority to combat climate change, including the strongest acknowledgement of the climate emergency from any court in the world.*
- A bill to modernize the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, including recognizing - for the first time in federal law - the right of everyone in Canada to a healthy environment.*
- More than 150,000 people from throughout Canada writing the federal government in support of a green and just pandemic recovery.*
- A bill to redress environmental racism.*
- A bill requiring Canada to chart a course to zero emissions.*

*...and so much more!*

*You have helped put Canada on the path to a brighter future. There is still much work to be done as we get back to "normal" because "normal" wasn't working for most people or the planet. But that critical work is continuing thanks to your support. We truly couldn't do it without you.*

*With gratitude,  
The entire DSF Team*

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# AskGord



*I am in my fifties, and trips to the men's room are happening more often, especially at night. Is there a natural product that can help?*

Glad to see you are paying attention to your health. Urinary urgency, problems initiating and maintaining urine stream, and feeling like your bladder is never empty are symptoms of benign prostate hyperplasia (BPH) but can also be common to prostate cancer. Early detection is critical, so get your PSA level tested; it's a simple blood screening which measures a protein called prostate-specific antigen (PSA) that signals the risk for prostate cancer.

Once you've ruled out prostate cancer, there are many vitamins, minerals, and nutraceuticals that help manage BPH and promote prostate health in general. Look for saw palmetto extract, rye flower pollen, lycopene, selenium, and zinc in a well-researched formula to improve your quality of life.

*I have heard a lot about plant sterols for managing cholesterol levels. Do they live up to the hype?*

Plant sterols—also known as phytosterols—are naturally occurring compounds found in whole grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables. Their biological activity involves blocking absorption sites for dietary cholesterol. Supplementation has emerged among the simplest and safest interventions to benefit cardiac health. Research conducted by the European Atherosclerosis Society concludes plant-sterol consumption of a mere 2 g/d can inhibit intestinal absorption of harmful LDL cholesterol up to 10%. With average North American plant sterol consumption falling short of 500 mg/d, supplementation in powder, tablets, or softgels is a safe and effective way to reach a therapeutic goal of 2 g daily.

You have a question you would like answered about your health and supplements? Gord would be happy to answer them! We could even feature them in this page if others could benefit from the information.

Reach out to him at [facebook.com/newrootsherbal](https://facebook.com/newrootsherbal) or call 1 800 268-9486 ext. 237



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