

# Flourish



HEALTHY BODY, MIND, AND SPIRIT

## The Sunshine Vitamin

A Ray of Hope for Moderating  
COVID-19 Symptoms

## How to Manage Mood during Crises

Naturopathic Perspectives

## We're Making Memories

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Summer 2020

# Editor's Letter



Thanks for taking some time for *Flourish*. Last we checked, summer has not been cancelled, but like most things, it will be very different. So, we have put together plenty of ideas to help you enjoy this cherished season while staying local and staying safe, in both body and mind.

We start off discussing mood management during crises, along with the importance of proper sleep. *Relationship Reboot* provides some great tips that many of us can use during these strange times. A gut check explores the role our microbiome plays for multiple health conditions.

Next we delve into the health benefits of astragalus for strengthening immunity, the antioxidant powerhouse resveratrol, and recent studies regarding vitamin D and its promising new potential.

Natural approaches for adult eczema and recommendations for staying properly hydrated this summer should also prove of interest, not to mention several recipes with a focus on flavour, freshness, and better health.

We appreciate your continued readership as we navigate this new normal together. Stay safe, shop local, and support one another!

Enjoy summer;  
you've earned it!

Sophia Golanowski, BCom, MBA  
Editor-in-Chief

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# How to Manage Mood during Crises

## Naturopathic Perspectives

by Dr. Farnoush Khodarahmi, MSc, MA, ND

### How to Manage Anxiety and Depression during COVID-19 Crisis?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a pandemic that has affected more than 200 countries all around the world, according to the World Health Organization. This disease outbreak, which started in January 2020, has shocked the world due to its uncontrollable spread and increasing death rate. Social isolation, reduced financial ability, and the lack of certainty about the future may cause symptoms of anxiety and depression in many individuals during this period. Amidst all this, many are worried about their own health status or the health of their loved ones.

### How Does COVID-19 Crisis Relate to Anxiety and Depression?

If you are a person who suffers from anxiety or depression, living in the midst of COVID-19 crisis can increase your symptoms. For many others, this pandemic can lead to depression and anxiety. It is well known that crisis situations increase the incidence of anxiety and depression.

You may be constantly worried because you might feel that there is a possible threat to your health but you cannot fix it. You may not be able to concentrate on your day-to-day activities as you stay in a panicked state of constant nervousness, not knowing what to do and what your future will be. You may feel your heart racing frequently. If you notice these symptoms, you may suffer from an anxiety disorder. If you get constant depressive thoughts, find yourself withdrawing from your loved ones, are unable to sleep well, or notice changes in your appetite, you may be going into depression. If you develop such symptoms, it is best to seek medical help. However, in times like this where you are confined to your home, trying some of the natural home remedies will help immensely.

### Use of Herbal Supplements

The use of medicinal plants and their products for various treatments has been ongoing throughout human history. Many plants are identified as being effective for managing mild to moderate depression and anxiety. There can be side effects due to herbal supplements, especially if you are on other medications. They can interact with certain medications that are taken for other illnesses and can give rise to serious side effects. Some side effects of herbal medications are drowsiness, headache, nausea, allergic reactions, and an increase in bleeding tendency.

Therefore, if you consider using any plant products as a treatment for anxiety or depression, discuss it with your doctor first. Your doctor will help you to understand the benefits and risks better and assist you to choose a suitable herbal supplement.

## Which Plant Products or Herbal Supplements Can Be Used to Treat Depression and Anxiety?



### Chamomile

Chamomile can be used for managing anxiety and is generally considered safe. A cup a day of freshly brewed chamomile tea can relax you and let the stress out of your system. Stress is the main reason for depression and anxiety. Dried rose petals, spearmint, orange peel, and holy basil are some of the things you can combine when brewing your chamomile tea, which will enhance the effects of soothing chamomile.

### Lavender

Lavender is an evergreen plant. Out of many types of lavender, *Lavendula angustifolia* is the common type used for medicinal purposes. Lavender can be taken as an oral supplement, but it is commonly used as aromatherapy. Results from studies show that odours are capable of altering emotional states. Ambient odours of lavender and orange, for instance, have been shown to reduce anxiety and improve mood in dental patients. In another study, lavender and rosemary essential oils have been showed to reduce test-taking anxiety among graduate nursing students.

Lavender oil, which is an essential oil, can be applied on the wrists or hands. The relaxing scent of lavender keeps your anxiety in check. You can also use high-quality diffusers. Diffuse 6–8 drops of lavender oil and use every day for about an hour.



Studies have shown both inhaled lavender and oral lavender are good for reducing anxiety. Some studies suggest that oral lavender is effective in reducing symptoms of both anxiety and depression. Another study has shown that lavender fragrance has a beneficial effect on insomnia (sleep issues) and depression in female college students.

Oral lavender also helps to improve insomnia, which is a common symptom of those suffering from depression. It helps to stabilize your mood and relieve stress in depression. Lavender can also be brewed as a tea. As it is an anxiolytic, it increases calm and relaxation and relieves anxiety. It helps you to sleep peacefully and reduces sleep disturbances which usually occur when you suffer from anxiety and depression.

When you suffer from anxiety, you will experience frequent anger, agitation, and restlessness. Lavender is known to interact with the neurotransmitter *gamma*-aminobutyric acid (GABA). This helps to calm your brain and the activity of your nervous system.



### Kava

Kava can be an effective herbal supplement to relieve your anxiety. A recent study has shown kava to be helpful in nonclinical populations (more “situational” anxiety as a short-term anxiolytic). However, in a few rare cases, liver damage was observed in patients taking kava. The advice of a health-care practitioner might be necessary before actually using it.

Kava is a herbal plant originating from Western and South Pacific regions. The root of kava is well known to cause relaxation and is a great remedy for anxiety, stress, insomnia, and even symptoms of depression. It can be as effective as benzodiazepine and tranquilizers, which are medications used in treating anxiety. Kava doesn’t cause dependence or tolerance, which is an advantage.

When you suffer from anxiety, you may have various phobias and panic attacks. Kava is known as “Nature’s Valium” due to its efficacy against these symptoms. As kava enhances the release of the hormone serotonin, it helps to manage depression.

It is recommended to discuss the benefits and risks with your health-care practitioner before using kava supplements.

## Valerian

Valerian root has been used for centuries and is a common ingredient in herbal supplements. It can alleviate insomnia and nervous tension caused by anxiety and depression. It can reduce tension headaches due to stress, and even trembling during a panic attack. Many researchers think that it increases GABA, which is a chemical in the brain that contributes to calming and relaxing your body. This is similar to the action of diazepam (Valium) and alprazolam (Xanax), which are common medications used in anxiety. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) labelled valerian root “Generally Recognized As Safe” (GRAS), although side effects like headache, abdominal pain, and dizziness are possible. Some clinical trials have suggested that valerian and passionflower, which is a perennial flowering plant with a sweet scent, have helped to manage stress and anxiety.



## Lemon Balm

Using lemon balm was shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety such as excitability and nervousness. It is well tolerated and considered a safe method of relieving anxiety.

## How Does Yoga Help in Relieving Symptoms of Anxiety and Depression?

Yoga has become increasingly popular in recent times. Yoga includes physical poses (asanas), controlled breathing practiced in conjunction with these asanas, and periods of deep relaxation.

Yoga is known to reduce the impact of exaggerated stress responses which occur in both anxiety and depression. The exercises and various postures in yoga help you to improve fitness and stretchability as well as improving your overall health. By modulating the stress response, yoga helps to decrease the physiological arousal which occurs in anxiety and depression. This helps to reduce your heart rate, ease your respiration, and lowers your blood pressure, thus relieving your symptoms.

Although most yoga practices are safe, some can be strenuous, especially for the elderly and those who suffer from mobility issues. It is best to have a discussion with your health-care practitioner before starting yoga as a treatment option for your anxiety and depression.



## How Does Meditation Help in Managing Anxiety and Depression?

Being socially isolated in a crisis situation like COVID-19 can increase the symptoms of depression. Although antidepressants and psychotherapy are the first-line treatments, research suggests that regular meditation can help change how your brain responds to stress and anxiety.

Meditation has been found to change regions of your brain which are linked with depression such as the amygdala (fear centre). When you meditate, you are able to ignore negative sensations of stress and anxiety.

Meditation can be as simple as closing your eyes and counting breaths, or repeating a single phrase or word. It helps to reduce negative thoughts and stressful feelings. When you meditate deeper, you can identify the negative thoughts and understand them so well that you don't have to act on them.

**Enjoy a Warm Bath:** At the end of the day, enjoy a nice, warm bath, which will help you to have a good night's sleep.

**Read a Book Which You Enjoy:** The reading should be light and enjoyable, and not a book with emotional toil. Books that enhance your self-esteem help to manage your depression and anxiety symptoms.

Having a balanced, nutritious diet; drinking plenty of water; engaging in regular exercise; and resting adequately will help you fight symptoms of depression and anxiety at a time of crisis situations such as COVID-19 pandemic.



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# Sleep Well

by Guillaume Landry, MS, Naturopath

For a healthy night's rest, our bodies require between seven and eight hours of sleep. Poor or offset sleep increases the risk of cancer, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease; not to mention the stress induced during the day, which in turn affects sleep and fuels a vicious circle.

Neon lights, LEDs, blue screens, and other artificial lights are all sleep-disruptive elements. They are disruptive to the genetic program that regulates human sleep; the cycle of hormones is intimately linked to daylight and darkness. The darker your night, the better the action of the hormone melatonin that governs your sleep. In contrast, the brighter your sleep environment is, the more hormonal imbalances will increase the risk of gaining weight, developing diabetes, or needing sleep medication. Take a bold step and remove these screens from your bedroom, restoring it to the sanctuary your body needs. To contribute to a good sleep, it should be dark, without electronic devices, relatively cool, regularly aerated (as well as the bedding), moderately humid (40%), and quiet.

Stress and digestive problems are major causes of insomnia. You can manage stress throughout the day (meditation, relaxing activities, deep breathing, or



adaptogen plants such as ashwagandha or rhodiola early in the day). Better care of your diet can also improve your sleep. Taking some digestive enzymes with dinner can make a big difference! It is also well-known that exercise helps sleep and improves intestinal flora, so get those sneakers and get moving!

Melatonin supplementation, safe and without risk of dependence, must be finely dosed according to every person's needs. It not only restores better sleep but it also offers antioxidant, cholesterol-lowering, sedative, and analgesic effects—and it may even be of benefit for weight management.

The most popular botanicals to improve sleep are passionflower, hops, skullcap, chamomile, catnip, lavender, lemon balm, or *Panax notoginseng*. Choosing a formula containing a good variety offers improved synergy without risking overdose.

*Buenas noches!*

# Relationship Reboot

## Seven Tips to Help Reconnect

by Hye Kam, MFT



A few weeks into the pandemic, I heard a topic on the radio: “Will this pandemic lead to more babies being born nine months from now, or will it lead to more divorces and separations?” You may have had similar thoughts and conversations. How has this pandemic influenced your relationship?

Before the pandemic hit, most of us had it figured out—a rhythm, shared responsibilities, some balance... of how “we” as a couple worked and functioned. It wasn’t perfect. But it worked. With our outside world shutting down, it upset the delicate working balance we had in our relationships.

Personal boundaries are challenged as we find ourselves working from home, many of us with children in the house 24 hours a day, seven days a week. What happened to missing the kids for six to eight hours a day?

What happened to being able to focus on work and not having to navigate relationship dynamics with my partner all day long? What happened to my alone time and routine? I remember early on, someone said to me: “It’s like a sick social experiment.”

I have seen the wide range of impact on couples and families through the experiences of my clients, friends, and neighbours, as well as my own marriage of almost 19 years and our family of five children. That is why I am excited to share some of my favourite strategies to nurture relationships, with suggestions I have been using in my work with couples over the last ten years.

### Actively Remind One Another That We Are Allies and “in This Together”

Do you see your partner as your ally? Being mindful of the fact that our partner is someone who “has our back” helps us approach them in a spirit of partnership. When we argue and fight, we may see one another as adversaries. And for those of us who have been together for a long time, we can get stuck in “confrontational mode,” sometimes for so long that we forget what we are fighting about! Seeing one another from an “ally” perspective leaves room for differences in opinions while remaining unified. Verbally expressing this fact can remind one another of our good intentions and help avoid arguments.

Phrases like “This issue sucks but let’s figure it out together” or “I want to understand your position because, at the end of the day, we both want what’s best for you and me” earlier on in conversations can help curb arguments.

## There Are No Winners or Losers in “We”

In team sports, the whole team wins or the whole team loses; the same goes for our relationship. “We” are on the same team, yet “we” have so many fights about who is right and who is wrong. Let’s face it: We all love to be right! If we can let go of our desire to be right, then we can turn to our partner and wonder “why” we are feeling and acting this way. A different approach can help you be understood by your partner and bring in a team win!

The next time an argument involving who is “right or wrong” or whose way is “better or worse” arises, shift into “ally” mode by using a phrase like “I hate that we’re arguing. We’re trying to reach the same goal.”

## Say “Thank You”

With an unending list of things to do, the things that don’t get done are what catch our attention! Sadly, this can lead to an imbalance. I hear so many people complain that they feel unappreciated or that their contributions are not visible. It’s so important to voice to one another that we see them and the things they do, even if they seem small or a “given.”

Pick at least two or three specific things your partner does and thank them for it on a daily basis. Whether it’s for cleaning up after dinner or letting you pick the movie, saying thank you in a genuine way will foster positive connection in your relationship.

## Emotionally Connect Daily

We get caught up in the demands of life, and find ourselves feeling distant and disconnected over time. Relationships need active emotional investment. Even something small but thoughtful can bring you closer. Feeling connected will bring you together in navigating challenges.

Have an honest talk and explore what helps each of you feel emotionally connected to one another. Then see how to make it happen—a hug at the start and end of the day, a thoughtful text, or time to share a laugh. You can also set reminders on your phone to help it become a regular thing!

## Show Your Love in Thoughtful Ways

You and your partner probably have different ideas about what makes you feel loved. For your message to be communicated effectively, and your efforts to be fully appreciated, show your love in ways which speak to your partner—not according to your own preference.

Explore topics together like “what makes you feel most loved in our relationship?” and “what do you wish we had more of in our relationship?” Try to pick at least one of your partner’s answers and do it more often.

## “Just Us” Date Time Once a Week

I suspect you have heard this one before, but this is all the more important now given how this pandemic has strained our lives. No matter what it is, take a break from stress and disagreements and enjoy each other’s company.

Book “us” time once a week and find something which will allow both of you to engage with each other in a positive way. Brainstorm fun, enjoyable, and relaxing kinds of activities to do together. Some couples like to take turns choosing the activity or create a “fun jar” of ideas and draw an activity every week.

## Self Care—Take Time for Yourself

If we are going to tend to one another, we have to have enough energy to do so. When we don’t, our relationship can feel like another item on the “to-do” list rather than a relationship which nurtures and feeds both of us. It is a delicate balancing act of our own needs and couple relationship needs.

Each of you needs to figure out what helps you refuel, then plan for and use your “alone” time.



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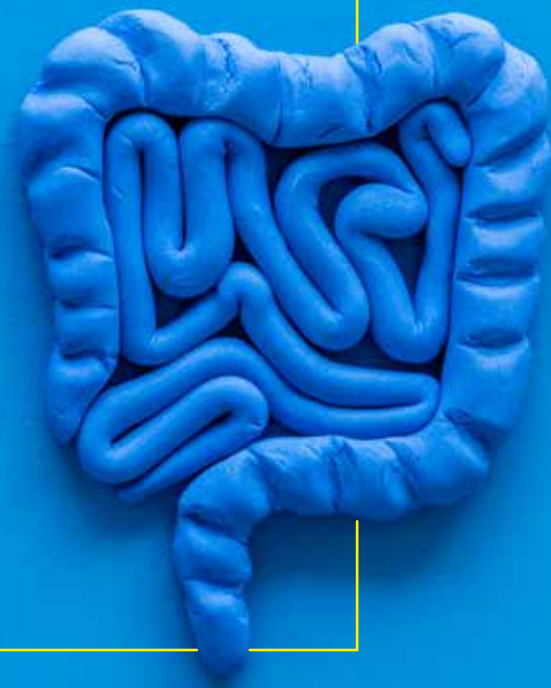


To ensure these products are right for your health condition, always read and follow label directions.

# The Gut Microbiome and Health

## Naturopathic Perspectives

by Dr. Ann-Marie Regina, ND



The human gastrointestinal tract (GIT) alone contains  $10^{14}$  microorganisms including bacteria, viruses, and fungi. That's approximately 100 times more microbial cells than human cells, which shows how much of an impact they can have on human health.

The term to describe the range of microorganisms found in an environment is “microbiota.” The environment in which the organisms live—in this case the human GIT—is termed “microbiome.” Humans and microorganisms have evolved together over time, forming a symbiotic and mutually beneficial relationship. Some of the benefits conferred by gut microbiota include maintaining the integrity of the mucosal barrier of the GIT, vitamin and nutrient production, and immune-system regulation. There is an optimal balance working in the GIT: Disruption of this balance can result in a host of symptoms, as certain microorganisms can have detrimental effects on the body and can contribute to disease. This is termed “dysbiosis.”

### Diseases Impacted by Dysbiosis of the Gut

#### Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)

Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is an umbrella term for two diseases: Chron's disease and ulcerative colitis. Both are conditions in which inflammation results in damage to the intestinal tract, resulting in abdominal pain, nutrient deficiencies, and systemic illness. Dysbiosis is a cause and an outcome of IBD.

In IBD, the immune system is overly aggressive within the digestive tract, resulting in inflammation. The immune system also attacks certain microorganisms, as it has been observed that there is a diminished microbial diversity in those with IBD. Protective organisms, such as *Bifidobacterium* and *Clostridium* species, are reduced, while destructive species, like *Proteobacteria* and certain strains of *Escherichia coli*, are increased.

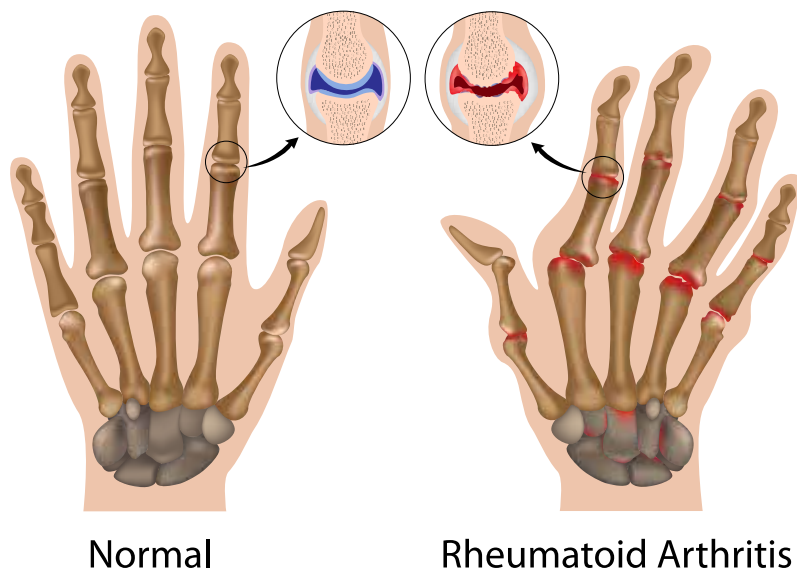
These destructive species further promote inflammation and activate disease-triggering immune responses.

### Depression

The brain-gut-microbiota axis is bidirectional. The brain communicates with the gut, and the microbes in the gut can communicate with the brain. The central route of communication is implicated through the vagus nerve, which directly connects the GIT to the brain. Inflammation is one of the hallmarks of depression and can alter the function of the gut barrier, leading to changes in gut bacteria. Patients with depression notably have a different microbiota with reduced levels of health-promoting bacteria than nondepressive individuals. This dysbiosis further contributes to the symptoms of depression, as the bacteria that is communicating with the brain is proinflammatory, and the cycle continues.

## Rheumatoid Arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune condition, meaning the immune system is attacking self-cells, specifically within the joints. It is proposed that, since autoimmune markers such as rheumatoid factor and anticitrullinated protein antibodies are present in the blood well before joint inflammation occurs, the autoimmunity may stem from sites such as the GIT or airway mucosa. The disproportionate inflammatory response has been shown to be triggered by dysbiosis in the gut, as certain bacteria activate autoreactive immune cells.



## Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune condition that results in destruction of the *beta* cells of the pancreas. This results in no insulin release and, consequently, impaired glucose regulation. Usually, the disease presents in childhood. As shown in rheumatoid arthritis, the gut bacteria are able to affect the immune system. Certain bacteria contain an endotoxin called lipopolysaccharide (LPS) which stimulates the inflammatory response and impairs pancreatic *beta*-cell function. Some studies have shown that people with type 1 diabetes have more circulating LPS than nondiabetic individuals.

LPS can also damage the intestinal mucosa, leading to more inflammation and increase in exposure to environmental antigens triggering the already reactive immune system. In type 1 diabetes, gut diversity and stability are reduced compared to nondiabetic individuals. The low diversity has been proposed to limit the ability to digest diverse diets, which further leads to diminished microbiota contributing to disease.

## A Naturopathic Approach to Gut Dysbiosis

### Probiotics

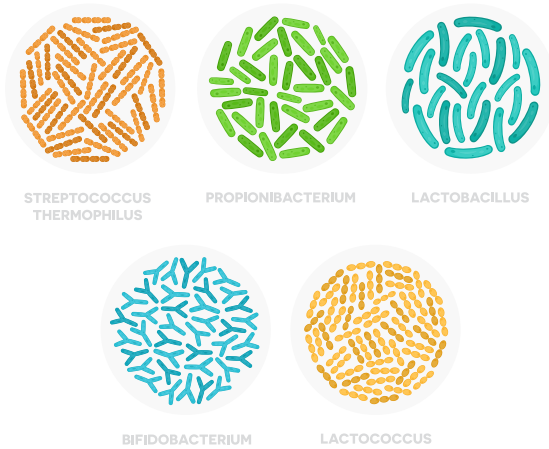
In terms of the above conditions, probiotics are an appropriate choice of therapy to mitigate symptoms related to dysbiosis. Before taking probiotics, however, it is important to speak with a health-care practitioner like a naturopathic doctor, as not all probiotics work the same.

In the treatment of ulcerative colitis, traditional probiotics play a limited role, but the specific strain *E. coli* Nissle and other proprietary strains have been shown to maintain remission and reduce inflammation. Other strain-specific probiotics that are optimal choices for IBD are *F. prausnitzii* which protects the gut, maintains the gut barrier, and stimulates the protective aspect of the immune system.

To reduce the effects of dysbiosis in depression, psychobiotics, which are a family of probiotics that have a positive effect on mental health, can be utilized. Psychobiotics have also expanded to include prebiotics, which are soluble dietary fibres that feed the gut bacteria. In studies using psychobiotics such as FOS and BGOS (prebiotics), participants showed decreased waking cortisol, which is the stress hormone that is a marker for anxiety and depression. Further, specific strains, such as *Bifidobacterium longum*, decreased morning cortisol and subjective levels of anxiety as well as increasing cognitive functioning.

Probiotics have a wide safety profile for rheumatoid arthritis. Their effect on reducing some

## PROBIOTICS



proinflammatory cytokines of the immune system like IL-6 has been proven, but not other markers of inflammation or pain. It seems that diets rich in probiotics—like fermented foods, dietary fibres, and a variety of vegetables—have stronger evidence for reducing pain than probiotics taken as a supplement.

There is strong evidence that dysbiosis is present in autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, and probiotics help to restore healthy mucosal barrier function and reduce impact of harmful bacteria.

However, autoimmune conditions are multifactorial, and other aspects of the disease need to be addressed. In combination with other treatments like lifestyle, diet, botanicals, and hormone regulation, probiotics can also add to treatment success.

Like other autoimmune conditions, individuals with type 1 diabetes mellitus have a compromised mucosal barrier. The research for strain-specific or multistrain probiotics to treat the diabetes is limited; however, probiotics can restore the intestinal barrier and can restore bacterial balance. Dietary factors, such as prebiotics and complex carbohydrates, are fermented by gut bacteria which produce a short-chain fatty acid called butyrate. Butyrate helps to maintain gut integrity and reduce intestinal permeability, and it is anti-inflammatory; all important in treating autoimmune conditions.

Finally, there is some evidence which supports gluten-free eating. Celiac disease, another autoimmune condition in which an individual creates autoantibodies against gluten, has been linked with other autoimmune conditions. A gluten-free diet in those with type 1 diabetes can reduce immune burden and can theoretically prevent celiac disease from being triggered.



### Dr. Ann-Marie Regina, ND

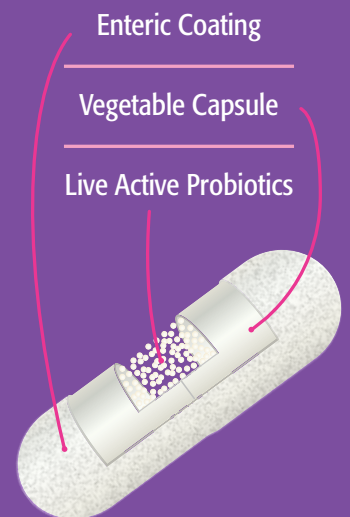
She seeks to empower patients with quality care so they can live to their highest potential. Her mission is to provide individualized health-care that serves every need and desire, and puts no limits on what you can achieve.

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# Astragalus

## A tonic for the immune system

by Dr. Philip Rouchotas, MSc, ND  
and Dr. Heidi Fritz, MA, ND

Astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*) is a highly regarded herb belonging to the plant family Fabaceae and has a rich tradition of use within both Western herbalism and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). Astragalus is best known as an immune modulator and *Yin* tonic. Astragalus has been studied for use in a variety of conditions, including asthma and allergy, kidney disease, cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. Clinically, astragalus is often utilized as an immune modulator in the prevention of upper respiratory tract infections during the winter months.

### Activity

Astragalus contains a variety of constituents including flavonoids, saponins, and polysaccharides. Astragalus extract and its constituent astragalosides have been shown to exert antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, protecting brain tissue from damage, protecting mitochondria in various tissues including kidneys, and suppressing proinflammatory cytokine signaling, including in the lungs (NF- $\kappa$ B).

With respect to immune function, astragalus has been shown to increase subsets of immune cells in healthy patients, including neutrophils, lymphocytes, and monocytes, and has been shown to increase T- and B-cell proliferation.

In TCM, astragalus is considered a tonic for the spleen and lung meridians. Astragalus also strengthens *Qi* or vital energy, treats stagnant blood flow, and “improves *Yin* deficiency by promoting diuresis to remove edema due to inadequate transformation of dampness and *Qi*.”

In modern scientific research, astragalus has been studied for a range of conditions affecting the respiratory system, kidneys, heart, and the immune system. For instance, studies have shown that supplementation with astragalus can be helpful for asthma, allergy, lung cancer, chronic kidney disease, diabetes, heart failure, and fatigue. In China, astragalus is used as an injectable preparation as well as in an extract for oral use.

### Allergy and Asthma

Astragalus has been shown to modify immune function in allergy and asthma. In a study of 90 children with asthma in remission, astragalus was compared to inhaled corticosteroids for preventing new asthma flares. Results showed that the effectiveness rates in preventing asthma recurrence were similar for astragalus (66%) and corticosteroids (73%,  $p > 0.05$ ); however, interestingly, children receiving combined treatment had significantly higher effectiveness than either treatment alone, at 96% ( $p < 0.05$ ). In a randomized, double-blind trial of 48 adult patients with a moderate to severe seasonal allergic rhinitis, use of astragalus for six weeks significantly reduced rhinitis compared to placebo.

### Kidney Disease

A multicentre prospective trial of 32 patients with stage 3 or 4 chronic kidney disease evaluated the effects of a herbal formula containing astragalus and *Angelica sinensis*. Herbal treatment was associated with

improved kidney function in 78% of patients. Serum creatinine decreased 12%, eGFR increased 21%, and albumin increased 2.7% compared to baseline.

## Cancer

Astragalus has been studied in patients undergoing treatment for lung cancer and colorectal cancer and has been shown to improve appetite, immune parameters, survival measures, and tumour response as well as side effects from chemotherapy including neutropenia (immune suppression), nausea and vomiting, and neuropathy. A systematic review and meta analysis of 65 RCTs including 4,751 patients with non-small-cell lung cancer (NSCLC) found that astragalus given alongside platinum-based chemotherapy in comparison with chemo alone evaluated cancer treatment outcomes. A meta-analysis of 20 of these trials ( $n = 1,520$ ) found a 35% reduced risk of death at 12 months associated with astragalus treatment. Another meta-analysis of 57 trials showed a 35% increased rate of having a tumour response to chemotherapy associated with astragalus treatment.



A meta-analysis of 13 randomized controlled trials evaluated TCM herbs (most commonly astragalus) in combination with FOLFOX4 chemotherapy in patients with advanced colorectal cancer. The most frequently used herbs were *Astragalus membranaceus*, *Panax ginseng*, *Atractylodes*, *Poria*, *Coix lachryma-jobi*, and *Sophora flavescens*. Researchers found that the addition of herbal medicines improved tumour response rate by 25%, one-year survival by 51%, and quality of life. Treatment with herbal medicine also lowered side effects from chemotherapy including neutropenia, nausea and vomiting, and neuropathy, compared to FOLFOX4 alone.

## Diabetes

In patients with type 2 diabetes, astragalus has been shown to prevent diabetic kidney damage and has been shown in a meta-analysis to improve glycemic control. A meta-analysis of 13 studies including 1,054 participants with type 2 diabetes investigated the effect of astragalus supplementation. Astragalus supplementation reduced fasting glucose

(0.83 points) and postprandial glucose, fasting insulin, HOMA-IR (insulin resistance), and hemoglobin A<sub>1C</sub> (1.7 points) compared to the control group.

## Heart Disease

In a randomized trial, 90 patients with congestive heart failure (CHF) were randomized to treatment with an ACE inhibitor (perindopril) medication plus high-, moderate-, or low-dose astragalus. High dose was equivalent to 7.5 g, moderate was equivalent to 4.5 g, and low dose was equivalent to 2.25 g twice daily for 30 days. Results demonstrated a dose-dependent improvement in left ventricular ejection fraction (LVEF), a measure of the heart's pumping ability, and patients' walking distance. LVEF improved 59% in the high-dose group.

These data demonstrate the extent to which astragalus have been scientifically investigated in both Chinese studies as well as Western studies. Astragalus demonstrates a high safety profile as it has been well tolerated in combination with a variety of potent medications including chemotherapy and cardiovascular medications. Astragalus has demonstrated effectiveness in a range of conditions including allergy and asthma, kidney disease, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer.

Individuals taking medications should consult with a licensed health-care provider to assess whether supplementation with astragalus is appropriate.

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# Resveratrol

## *The Imbibed Antioxidant*

by Dr. Philip Rouchotas, MSc, ND and Dr. Heidi Fritz, MA, ND

## Pharmacology

Resveratrol (also known as *trans*-resveratrol or *trans*-3,5,4'-trihydroxystilbene) is a potent antioxidant polyphenol derived from the skins of red grapes (*Vitis vinifera*) as well as from foods including berries, medicinal plants such as Japanese knotweed, and red wine. Resveratrol has been shown to exert a number of therapeutic effects including anti-inflammatory, antitumorigenic, and antioxidant properties that may help in the prevention and treatment of cardiometabolic disease, inflammation, endocrine disorders, and more.

Human studies show that resveratrol metabolism occurs primarily in the liver and results in the production of conjugated glucuronides and sulfate metabolites, which do have biological activity. The half-life of resveratrol ranges from one to five hours, and it seems generally well tolerated. Some of the more commonly reported side effects include gastrointestinal symptoms including nausea, flatulence, bowel motions, abdominal discomfort, loose stools, and diarrhea, associated with doses up to 2.5 to 5 g. Usual dosing ranges from 500 to 1,500 mg daily.

## Clinical Research

### • *Cardiometabolic Health*

A meta-analysis of 24 randomized controlled trials found that resveratrol supplementation had diverse antioxidant effects among patients with

metabolic syndrome and related disease. Resveratrol significantly decreased C-reactive protein by 0.55 points and tumour necrosis factor- $\alpha$  (TNF- $\alpha$ ) by 0.68 points. Although these are small changes numerically, they are clinically significant as predictors of heart disease, for instance.

A systematic review and meta-analysis of six studies examining a total of 196 patients with type 2 diabetes (104 resveratrol, 92 control/placebo) found that resveratrol supplementation was more effective than placebo/control for improvements in systolic blood pressure, hemoglobin A<sub>1c</sub>, and creatinine, although not for fasting glucose, homeostatic model assessment of insulin resistance, diastolic blood pressure, insulin, or cholesterol.



Another meta-analysis (11 RCTs, 384 patients) evaluating the effect of resveratrol supplementation on diabetes found that resveratrol “significantly reduced fasting glucose, insulin, glycated hemoglobin [HgbA<sub>1c</sub>], and insulin resistance (measured by using the homeostatic model assessment) levels in participants with diabetes,” but not in patients without diabetes.

Another meta-analysis by the same team assessed the effect of resveratrol on blood pressure. A total of six RCTs totalling 247 subjects were included, and results showed that resveratrol supplementation significantly reduced systolic but not diastolic blood pressure. Furthermore, subgroup analyses indicated that a higher dose of resveratrol ( $\geq 150$  mg/d) significantly reduces SBP of  $-11.90$  mmHg, whereas a lower dose of resveratrol did not show a significant lowering effect on SBP.

A study of patients with minimal hepatic encephalopathy, a condition associated with end-stage liver disease such as cirrhosis, found that supplementation with resveratrol reduced symptoms of depression (Back Depression Inventory) and anxiety (State-Trait Anxiety Inventory); and improved physical function, body pain, general health, vitality, and social function, compared to control.

### • *Anti-inflammatory/Rheumatology*

A randomized controlled trial evaluated 100 patients with rheumatoid arthritis who were given either 1 g resveratrol along with the conventional treatment for three months or included in a control group that was given conventional treatment only. After three months, clinical endpoints including the 28-joint count for swelling and tenderness as well as the disease activity score assessment for 28 joints were reduced significantly in the resveratrol treated group. In addition, serum levels of biochemical inflammatory markers declined in the resveratrol-treated patients, including C-reactive protein, erythrocyte sedimentation rate, undercarboxylated osteocalcin, matrix metalloproteinase-3, tumour necrosis factor- $\alpha$ , and interleukin-6.

Another study evaluated the effect of resveratrol in patients with knee osteoarthritis. A double-blind, placebo-controlled, randomized, multicentre study evaluated 110 patients on meloxicam to either adjuvant resveratrol (500 mg/d) or placebo for 90 days. Results showed that patients taking resveratrol had a significant reduction in pain severity and functional disability compared to placebo, as assessed by the Western Ontario and McMaster Universities Osteoarthritis Index.

### • *Endocrine Health*

As might be expected given its effect on diabetes, resveratrol may also improve polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). A total of 34 women with PCOS were randomized to either 1,500 mg/d resveratrol or placebo for three months. Results showed that resveratrol was associated with a significant (23.1%) decrease of total testosterone as well as a 22.2% decrease of dehydroepiandrosterone sulfate (DHEAS), as well as with a decrease of fasting insulin level by 31.8% and an increase of the Insulin Sensitivity Index.



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# Five Herbs to Start Your Own Medicinal Garden

## Herbal Essentials

by Dr. Felicia Assenza, HBSc, ND

Botanical medicine, or the study and use of plants as medicine, is one of my favourite healing modalities as a naturopathic doctor. I especially love using plants that are widely available and that people are familiar with. I find that knowing and feeling connected with and excited about any medicine I am taking seems to make it that much more effective.

One of my favourite ways to get to know and connect with healing plants is by planting them and helping them grow. Many of the plants that I commonly use in practice are actually quite easy to grow, and some of them are native to North America and can even be found on a local forest walk.

Below, you will find the top five plants in my medicinal garden, based on their medicinal uses and relative ease of maintenance and care.

### Mint

While mint is not native to North America, wild mint can usually be spotted if you spend enough time in the forest, especially where the soil is moist. This speaks to how easy it is for mint to grow in abundance. It even comes back every spring after disappearing for the winter.

Because of its hardiness and abundant growth, this is one you may want to plant in a pot or container to keep it from spreading and taking over your garden. With all of its handy uses, though, too much mint might not be such a bad thing.

There are two types or species of mint that I commonly use in my practice: peppermint (*Mentha × piperita*) and spearmint (*Mentha × spicata*). I will often use peppermint for digestive concerns. One of my favourite ways to use it is as a tea. It's especially great for bloating and constipation, plus has a refreshing, cooling taste that most people enjoy. This cooling aspect of peppermint also makes it good for soothing inflammation.

I use spearmint more for its role in hormone regulation, especially in women. It has actually been shown to have antiandrogenic effects in women with PCOS, meaning it can help decrease testosterone levels that may be causing issues such as unwanted hair growth or acne.





## Oregano

This is another one that is easy to grow. It also happens to be in the same family as mint. While oregano is great to have on hand for cooking since it adds delicious flavour (especially in tomato sauce!) and nutrients to your meal, I most often use this one in practice as an essential oil.

Oil of oregano is traditionally used for its antimicrobial effects, and it appears that the phenolic compound carvacrol, found in oregano, is a key contributor to these effects. In the clinic, I have seen it work well taken orally to help clear viral infections like colds and flus, as well as topically on the skin to help clear fungal infections like athlete's foot or even viral infections like planter's warts. I usually combine it with other antimicrobial herbs like garlic for optimal efficacy.

## Marigold

Careful on this one! There are actually two different plants that both have the same common name, marigold. They are French marigold (*Tagetes patula*) and pot marigold (*Calendula officinalis*). Both produce beautiful, bright, cheery flowers and have their own benefits, but the one I will be talking about here is *Calendula officinalis*.

I often use *Calendula* for skin concerns. It is quite effective at helping to heal broken or damaged skin, making it a great herb for sunburns in the summer or dry skin in the winter. I love making oil infusions and skin salves with this little healing flower. Don't just take my word for it, though; there is research to show *Calendula*'s efficacy in wound healing. It has been studied in the treatment of skin conditions from diaper rash to palliative care and cancer treatment.



One of *Calendula*'s lesser-known uses is in treating inflammation in the gastrointestinal tract. I will often prescribe it topically as an oil or cream for hemorrhoids, or even as a tea or in a soup for inflammatory bowel diseases such as ulcerative colitis.

*Calendula* is, however, a member of the Asteraceae plant family. This plant family tends to be a common source of allergy, especially for people who suffer from seasonal allergies. If you are one of these people who are allergic to plants in this family, you likely want to avoid using *Calendula*. Other common plants in this family include daisies, dandelions, sunflowers, chamomile, etc.



## Catnip

You've likely seen the effect that catnip has on cats, but did you know it actually has a calming effect on humans? I love cats, so if I'm being completely honest, part of the reason I planted catnip in my garden was to attract all the neighbourhood cats. Really, though, catnip is quite useful.

As a tea or tincture, it has calming effects, making it great for soothing anxiety or helping with sleep. It can also be used to repel unwanted insects all summer. As an essential oil, it may be even more effective at repelling mosquitos than DEET, and it also seems to repel cockroaches! Who wouldn't want catnip around?



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## Echinacea

Here's one of those native herbs I was telling you about. Echinacea (*Echinacea purpurea*) is a distinct purple flower that can be found in warm, sunny spots throughout the summer and is a beautiful accent to any garden in my opinion. You may even have seen it in gardens paired next to its yellow look-a-like, the black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*). Both are favourites of butterflies and bees, so they are definitely great herbs to have around.

In practice, I use echinacea to help support the immune system, especially going into cold and flu season. I have patients who swear by using echinacea as soon as they start to feel a cold coming on. There is also some research to show that echinacea can actually be helpful in alleviating symptoms of the common cold and shortening its duration. A plant that can help shorten cold and make it less troublesome than usual? Definitely one that I want in my garden!

Echinacea has also been investigated for its role in other immune-related ailments such as the flu, eczema, HIV, herpes, and cancer. Careful if you have seasonal allergies, though! Remember that Asteraceae family we talked about earlier? Echinacea is also a member of that family, so avoid it if you have allergies.

In practice, I most often use echinacea for boosting the immune system as a tea or as a tincture (alcohol extract). I also often combine it with other herbs that help support the immune system such as licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) or elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*).

And there you have it: Five great herbs to start off your garden! What are your favourite herbs to plant in the garden? You may have noticed a couple of different ways of using herbs throughout the article. Herbs can be used in so many ways: teas, tinctures, oil infusions, essential oils, herb baths... even in cooking! How they are used as well as what part of the plant is used depends on the plant as well as what you want to use it for.

It is always best to consult a naturopathic doctor or other health-care practitioner who understands botanical medicine before using any botanical medicine, not only for efficacy but also for safety. We talked about allergies, but some plants may also have poisonous parts or may interact with certain medications.



### Dr. Felicia Assenza, HBSc, ND

A graduate of the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM) in Toronto, her goal in every patient visit is to share the knowledge and experiences that she gained on her own journey to help move others forward on their health journeys.

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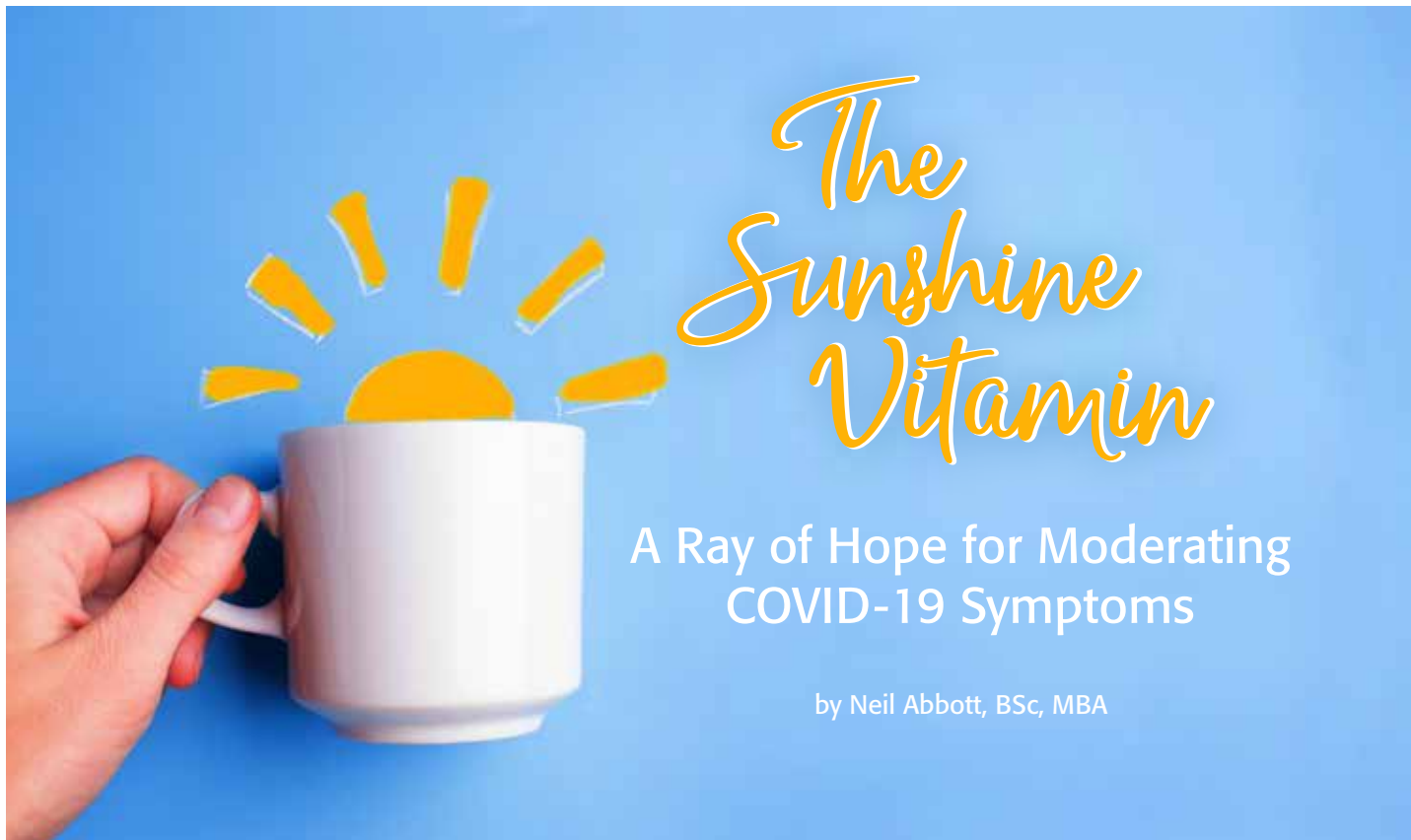


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Sometimes, we have good news worth sharing; this is one of those cases. Upon seeing a new study promoted by *CTV News*, I was compelled to share it with my friends and family, particularly my elderly parents. I am very pleased to share this with *Flourish* readers.

Recent studies have found an association between vitamin D deficiency and the severity of COVID-19 symptoms.

### *Our Situation*

The recent global outbreak of COVID-19 has impacted everyone, especially the elderly. There are currently no drugs or other therapeutics, nor vaccines approved by Health Canada to treat or prevent the novel coronavirus. In fact, the only proven effective strategy for dealing with COVID-19 is avoidance (social distancing, hand washing, and quarantine).

### *What Is Vitamin D?*

Vitamin D<sub>3</sub>, or “the sunshine vitamin,” is a prehormone which, upon conversion to its active form, has an array of positive physiological activities within the body. Vitamin D is well known for its role in calcium absorption and deposition within the skeletal system (bones and teeth).

The well-established role of vitamin for immunity, in helping prevent and treat seasonal influenza, and the mechanisms by which this is achieved, have resulted in considerable interest in vitamin D possibly having a role in the fight against COVID-19.

### *Vitamin D Deficiency Is an Issue*

Canadians and people living in other higher-latitude countries have varying degrees of vitamin D deficiency. As we age, our skin becomes less effective in producing vitamin D. This may explain the correlation of higher mortality from COVID-19 amongst the elderly, who are chronically vitamin D-deficient.

Current guidelines call for vitamin D to be between 75 and 225 nmol/L (Aloia 2008, Hughes 2009). Almost all Canadians are deficient according to these recommendations.

In 2009, a panel of 16 scientists and physicians issued a call to action urging an increase in the recommended intake of vitamin D to 2,000 IU/d and raising the minimum blood level to 100–150 nmol/L (Garland 2009).



## Promising Developments

One study (Daneshkhah 2020) suggests that vitamin D may reduce COVID-19 severity and save lives by suppressing the cytokine storm in COVID-19 patients. The study found that patients from countries with high COVID-19 mortality rates, such as Italy, Spain, and the UK, had lower levels of vitamin D compared to patients in countries that were not as severely affected.

Another study (Alipio 2020) found that vitamin D status is significantly associated with clinical outcomes. They reported that for each standard deviation increase in serum levels of vitamin D, **there was an eight-fold increase in the odds of having mild v. severe symptoms, and a 20-fold increase in the odds of having a mild v. critical outcome.**

Researchers in Edmonton are among several groups around the world looking into whether there is any benefit of boosting vitamin D levels in a patient's blood as a means of protecting them against COVID-19. Dr. Aldo J. Montano-Loza, an associate professor at the University of Alberta, is preparing to launch a study of at least 70 Albertans who contracted COVID-19 to see if their vitamin D levels put them at risk of severe infection and whether boosting these levels will help their condition.

## Summary

Vitamin D provides a wide spectrum of benefits spanning both prevention and treatment of diseases. It was even included as a suggestion in the *Canadian Food Guide* for many years. Vitamin D is inexpensive and is available to everyone. Its safety is considered exceptionally high at approved doses. Vitamin D has been clearly proven to broadly impact immune function in a manner that is reproducibly beneficial. Specific evidence from controlled human intervention trials shows vitamin D supplementation to effectively prevent or treat seasonal influenza.

Preliminary evidence is showing individuals who test positive for COVID-19 have profoundly lower levels of the vitamin in their blood, compared to people who test negative for the virus. A rapidly increasing number of scientists are calling for vitamin D supplementation as an important tool in the fight against COVID-19.

The information in this article is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. All content is for informational purposes only. This is not a recommendation for any products nor dosing regimens. Always seek the guidance of your doctor or other qualified health-care practitioner with any questions you may have regarding your health or a medical condition.

## Vitamin D and COVID-19—2020 Science

The evidence is promising, but preliminary. It demonstrates correlation, and further investigation is required to show causality.

Alipio (2020) evaluated the databases of three hospitals in South Asian countries. A retrospective multicentre study of 212 cases with laboratory-confirmed infection of SARS-CoV-2 was conducted. Data pertaining to clinical features and serum 25(OH)D levels were extracted from the medical records.

*They reported that for each standard deviation increase in serum levels of vitamin D, there was an eight-fold increase in the odds of having mild v. severe symptoms and a 20-fold increase in the odds of having a mild v. critical outcome.*





D'Avolio and colleagues (2020) evaluated the vitamin D status of 107 people who underwent testing for COVID-19. Twenty-seven of the participants tested positive.

*The patients who tested positive had an average blood vitamin D level of 27.7 nmol/L. The average vitamin D blood level of the people who tested negative was 61.4 nmol/L.*

Daneshkhah and colleagues (2020) used a surrogate marker of vitamin D, C-reactive protein (CRP), and evaluated countries upon reaching a case number threshold of at least 10,000.

*Their model showed that the risk of developing severe COVID-19 illness among individuals with severe vitamin D deficiency was 17.3%, while the risk of developing severe COVID-19 illness among individuals with normal vitamin D levels was 14.6%, a reduction of risk of 15.6%.*

Grant and colleagues (2020) compiled an excellent review of impact of vitamin D on immunity, evidence of benefit to seasonal influenza, mechanisms of disease caused by COVID-19, and the likely role vitamin D supplementation would play in prevention and treatment.

*They conclude their review by recommending adults to take 10,000 IU/d of vitamin D for one month, followed by 5,000 IU/d thereafter.*

Hribar and colleagues (2020) did a literature review to determine the relationship between vitamin D, Parkinson's disease (PD), and COVID-19.

*Authors are calling for all elderly individuals to supplement with 2,000–5,000 IU/d of vitamin D for potential protection offered against COVID-19.*

The number of research teams calling for similar action is growing daily (Caccialanza 2020, Jakovac 2020, Kara 2020, McCartney 2020).

## Relevant Studies

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# Adult Eczema

## Naturopathic Approaches

by Dr. Arlene Dubier, ND



Itchy skin, dryness, redness, and cracking—uncomfortable signs of an eczema flare-up that can range from mild to having a significant impact on quality of life. Corticosteroid creams can do a fine job of targeting symptoms and inflammation associated with eczema, although below are some suggestions to get to the root cause and prevent future flare-ups.

### What Is Eczema?

Eczema, also called atopic dermatitis, is a common chronic inflammatory disease affecting the skin barrier which presents in around 2–3% of adults. Eczema presentations can look different depending on the individual, although itchy, dry, red skin is commonly seen on flexural surfaces (e.g. elbow crease) and the head and neck (including around the eyes). Often with eczema, we see related asthma, allergies, and constipation. Eczema and its related conditions can be considered as a sign of what is going on inside the body (e.g. nutritional deficiencies, food sensitivities, or imbalances of intestinal bacteria).

#### Three factors play a role in eczema presentation:

1. A dysfunctional skin barrier;
2. An inflammatory response to various allergens; and
3. Decreased antimicrobial activity of the skin or impaired immune system function.

These interact with each other in a chicken-and-egg type of scenario. Genetics are also strongly involved in eczema presentations.

Environmental factors are regularly the source of allergens or irritants that cause eczema to flare up. This could include various body-care products (e.g. soaps or detergents), tight-fitted clothing, irritating clothing

fabrics (e.g. wool), exposure to smoke, pollution, changes in temperature, and certain foods. Common food allergies or sensitivities related to eczema include gluten, dairy, soy, eggs, fish, shellfish, and peanuts. It is interesting to note that eczema is more prevalent in industrialized countries, which could suggest that excessive hygiene is a contributing factor in a dysfunctional skin barrier and elevated immune response.

### General Naturopathic Treatments

#### Lifestyle Modifications

One way to improve barrier function of the skin is to promote adequate hydration via lukewarm baths, the use of a natural organic mild soap, and the application of moisturizers immediately after bathing when the skin is still wet. Skin-care products which are labelled to have a pH of 4.5–5 are best because they are closer to the



acidic pH of skin. Improving barrier function is important because this will decrease scratching, which itself contributes to damage of the skin barrier, causing greater dysfunction.

Loose-fitting clothing may also be more comfortable during a flare-up. It is less aggravating to wear cotton, silk, or other natural fibres, ensuring to avoid wool which can make itching worse.

Stress management is a key component of preventing eczema recurrence. Periods of stress and anxiety can affect the immune response of the body and increase inflammatory proteins. Psychological stress also directly affects the chronic “itching” pathway of the brain, causing it to become sensitized. Mind-body therapy such as biofeedback and mindfulness can help increase resilience to stressful situations or periods. Biofeedback is a type of therapy in which sensors are attached to your body to keep track of various involuntary mechanisms of the body, such as heart rate or muscle tension. Through this, one is able to learn techniques to control these body functions.

Stress management is different for everyone, so it is important to find what works for you, whether it be journaling, exercising, talking to a loved one, cuddling, or unwinding with a nice book.

## Dietary Modifications

In terms of nutrition, it is always important to incorporate healthy fats into the diet, such as walnuts, avocados, ground flaxseeds, and fish high in omega-3s. This would be the “SMASH” fish: salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines, and herring.

Having healthy fats is important because they fight inflammation in the body. Supplementation with fish oils may also be beneficial if you are not able to incorporate these in a high-enough quantity in your diet alone. For adults, between 2 and 4 g of combined EPA and DHA is beneficial. Another type of omega which has been studied for eczema is *gamma*-linolenic acid, or GLA. GLA is found in high amounts in borage oil and evening primrose oil. Supplementation of 500 mg–1 g of borage oil or 1–2 g of evening primrose oil is suggested dosing.

In general, during eczema flare-ups, it is best to follow an anti-inflammatory-type diet which avoids simple carbohydrates (e.g. white bread and pasta), dairy, nightshade vegetables (e.g. tomatoes and peppers), red or processed meat, processed sugars, and fried foods. However, in order to determine if any underlying food sensitivities are contributing to the recurrence of eczema, the gold standard is to undergo an elimination diet. Every practitioner does this slightly differently in terms of timelines of how long foods should be eliminated for and how and when these foods should be reintroduced.

The elimination diet involves completely removing gluten products, dairy, certain fruits and vegetables, red and processed meats, all sugars and sweeteners, alcohol, and caffeine. In the meantime, gut-healing protocols are often done because (fun fact), a lot of the immune system is in the gut!



## Other Supplementation

As “gut-healing protocol” was mentioned just above, one such protocol may include supplementation with a probiotic. Probiotics are live bacteria that are similar to or the same as bacteria that normally live inside the body. In studies of pregnant moms who supplemented with *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*, their babies were less likely to develop eczema throughout their lifetime. In general, studies have shown that the *Lactobacillus* species is more beneficial in those with eczema versus *Bifidobacterium* on its own.



Prebiotics are sources of indigestible fibre which act as food for probiotics, similar to fertilizer for plants. Prebiotics found in high amounts in foods such as leafy green vegetables, garlic, and onions have also shown promise in treatment of eczema in both children and adults.

Vitamin D<sub>3</sub> is something that everyone in Canada should be supplementing with during winter months with low sun exposure. It was shown to be beneficial in individuals with eczema and even in those with eczema who have frequent bacterial skin infections. A general maintenance dose of vitamin D<sub>3</sub> is 1,000 IU/d, but blood testing of 25-hydroxyvitamin D may be best to determine if further supplementation is required.

Additionally, botanicals (both topical and internal) have benefits for treating and preventing recurrence of eczema. It is up to your naturopathic or botanical medicine practitioner to determine what herbal combination is best to take internally—it could be a combination of herbs which support liver detoxification and modulate the immune system and stress response. Topically, creams with glycyrrhetic acid, a derivative of licorice root, have shown reduction of eczema symptoms when applied two to three times a day. Other healing herbs include the “Four Cs”: calendula, comfrey, chickweed, and chamomile.

It is important to keep in mind that these are general suggestions which may not cater to your specific needs. Please consult with your health-care practitioner if you are looking to start supplementation so they can determine a safe and relevant dosage for you.

## What Does Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Say?

TCM treats eczema as a pattern of deficiency (similar to the way we see it with Western principles). In Chinese medicine, the organ related to skin function is the lung, which controls the opening and closing of pores. The lung also regulates our immune-system function, which is why it is implicated in allergies.

The connected organ of the lung is the large intestine, which is related due to the commonality of constipation being present in individuals with eczema.

Common TCM patterns associated with eczema include lung *Qi* deficiency, failure of the lungs to regulate pores, failure of the lungs to nourish *Wei Qi* (defensive *Qi*/immune system), or large intestine dryness. Your naturopathic doctor or TCM practitioner will be able to diagnose which one of these may be relevant and treat it with acupuncture, herbs, or dietary changes.



**Dr. Arlene Dubier, ND**

Practicing in the Mississauga and Toronto areas, her main goal as a health-care practitioner is to provide a nurturing,

gentle approach to health-care using natural therapies

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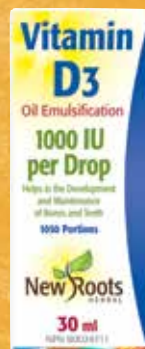
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# The Power of Planning to Reduce Stress

by Christina Della Rocca, Naturopath

We are living through an ever-changing time frame. Who knows what the situation will be as you read this article? The stress surrounding COVID-19 keeps adding up. Little things people would normally shrug off are causing tension and frustration. Many of us are feeling out of sorts, fed up, and stressed out.

A lot of this is due to the fact that we are sitting in a seat full of unknowns. When will my children be able to go back to school? Will I lose my job? Will my business survive the current state of affairs? Will we deplete our savings? Will our parents be OK? What about the economy? The list of “concerns” goes on and on.

By focusing our attention on things outside of our control, we can get inundated with worry, just waiting for the next big problem to hit. This in itself is very stressful. Stephen R. Covey explains this brilliantly in his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People*.

To relieve some of this stress, we need to shift our focus to things we can control. By being more “proactive,” we move out of our seat of concern and into our seat of “influence.” Great places to start are with our daily habits: The hours we will work, eating a healthy diet, getting plenty of rest, and exercising daily. We can also control how we treat others, our surroundings, and our personal growth. Having some control over these basics can help us start to feel more calm, relaxed, and centred, which will enable us to better handle anything that will inevitably come up.

Erin Wiley, MA, LPCC, a clinical psychotherapist, told *Headline*:



“Routine is even more important during times of distress or chaos. In order for our minds to function at maximum efficiency, we must have order and stability, and right now it’s harder than ever to have either. [...] Simple habits that we may have previously done—making the bed, blow-drying our hair—are simple activities we can do to remind our brain that life is still going on despite the interruptions we are facing.”

My recent consulting sessions have included helping clients create realistic routines and schedules for themselves in the face of all this “new normal.” Our daily routines must include all the tasks required for each family member to survive, as well as activities to help them thrive and reduce stress, with room to adjust as needed.

## Are You Ready to Start Bringing a Little More Normal Back Into Your Life?

No judgement here. For a while, even I was floating around. Being a person who thrives in a routine, I felt myself becoming increasingly stressed. That is when I sat down to create a schedule for myself and my family. I started with setting up a personal office space for myself, then got to work on a routine that would help me get my work done, have time for household duties, family fun, and self-care.

Here is a look at what has become my typical Monday-to-Friday lockdown schedule.

Note: This works best for my family, based on our current situation. Create your own schedule to meet your needs, and don't be afraid to adjust it as needed. I certainly have. Also included are some "supporting wellness tips."

| Christina's Routine                                                                                                                                                             | Wellness Tips...                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>6 h 30 – 7 h 15</b></p> <p><b>Morning ritual</b><br/>Shower • Cup of warm water with lemon • Quiet reflection/meditation</p>                                              | <p>Creating a morning routine that involves getting dressed, stretching, or deep breathing is paramount for productivity and wellbeing.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <p><b>7 h 15 – 8 h 00</b></p> <p>Latte • Healthy, balanced breakfast • Revise to-do list for the day • Check e-mail</p>                                                         | <p>A healthy breakfast provides energy to start you off. Next, it's important to plan out your day with what you need to accomplish. Working from home, time can slip away, with no official start or end.</p> <p>I always take 10 minutes at the start of my day to note what needs to get done. It will give you a sense of accomplishment as you check things off.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p><b>8 h 00 – 11 h 00</b></p> <p><b>Worktime (for me) or other activities/projects</b></p>  | <p><b>If you are working from home,</b> plan your hours. I have a morning session and an afternoon session, and if something urgent is not completed, I take a little time during the evening. Remaining flexible under our current circumstances is key.</p> <p><b>If you are not working,</b> I recommend that you plan for daily activities and tasks, or maybe even a project you have been wanting to get too.</p> <p><b>Have school-aged kids?</b> Determine some activities and projects for them too. Everyone thrives when they accomplish new things.</p> <p>The morning can be dedicated to educational activities including math, science, or history (lots of resources online). Be sure to include some activities that can be done away from the screens. Reading, writing letters (and mailing them), art, music... Get creative!</p> |



## Teach Yourself a New Skill

Try your hand at painting, learning a new computer program, or perhaps tackle some home improvements.

Try something you otherwise would never have time for. There are online segments for just about everything.

## Spend Some Time Outdoors

Plan to spend some time outdoors! One benefit we have during this tough period is more time to spend outside. Exposure to sunlight is important for our health! Often referred to as the sunshine vitamin, vitamin D is made in the skin from exposure to sunlight.

Research has shown potential benefits against cancer, heart disease, autoimmune diseases, influenza, type 2 diabetes, and depression. One study found that people had higher serotonin levels on bright sunny days than on cloudy days—and higher levels of serotonin correlate with better mood. So, be sure to get outside!

11 h 00 – 13 h 00

### Break time

Cup of tea/snack • Daily fitness or groceries • Lunch

It is important to **take breaks**, **refuel** with healthy snacks, and so you can keep going.

**Plan time for lunch.** It is easy to skip meals when we are busy and there is no routine. Skipping meals leads to unhealthy eating later in the day, which sabotages our health-and-wellness goals.

**Exercise!** Plan to do at least 30 minutes of movement in the day. Studies show that people who exercise tend to be healthier, happier, and more productive. I like to break up the day with a good outdoor run.

13 h 00 – 17 h 00

### Worktime (for me) or other activities/projects

Following a good bout of exercise and lunch, I am fresh to tackle an afternoon of work-related stuff.

**If you are not working**, or have kids at home, dive back into a project you started earlier in the day or spend some time outdoors.

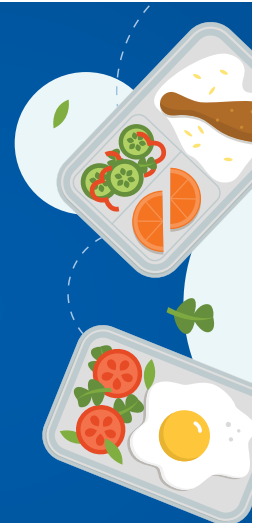
**Projects** like scrap-booking or putting together photo albums, going through the book-and-game shelves as well as the closets to purge what we don't need any more and donating the items are a few more ideas.

**Physical activities** to get the kids burning off energy can include a good long-distance bike ride, playing tag, setting up an obstacle course or scavenger hunt, and throwing a ball around. The ideas are endless!

## Planning Meals and Mealtime

Plan out your meals for the week as well as your shopping list, so you have the necessary ingredients on hand. Scrambling to prepare meals at the last minute when already hungry causes unnecessary stress and poor food choices. Sit down as a family to decide on the meals and snacks for the upcoming week. Create the meal plan and grocery list, and then have everyone participate in preparing the food. You can assign specific responsibilities or all do it together. Have fun teaching this important life skill!

When it comes to breakfast and lunch, older children can manage on their own. But “Family Dinners” are essential for me. These family gatherings show amazing benefits; better self-esteem and academic performance, and lower risks of depression, developing eating disorders, and obesity.





## Plan Some Alone Time

No matter who we are, we need time to refuel. Work it out so you can have some time alone to do whatever helps you rejuvenate.

A cup of herbal tea and a good book? A hot bath with lavender essential oil? A full episode of your favourite podcast? Whatever works for you!

17 h 00 – 20 h 00

Prepare and have supper as a family • Clean up • Light chores

**Plan meals and chores.** Spending more time at home with a full house means more cooking and cleaning!

Everyone having their responsibilities can significantly reduce the stress and increase the level of consideration in the household.

20 h 00 – 22 h 00

**Reconnecting, relaxation, and family fun time or alone time**

**Plan some time for fun and connecting with others.** Set aside the a little time to connect with people we are no longer seeing regularly, or who may be lonely and need a friendly call. Come together as a family or with friends to have some fun! Relaxing, laughing, and connecting are super important for your health and wellbeing.

**If you are single,** hop onto a *Zoom* call or have a virtual watch party with friends.

**If you have kids,** crack out the *Monopoly*, *Pictionary*, or *Blokus*; watch the latest comedy on *Netflix*; or play cards.

So many options to choose from!

22 h 00 – 23 h 00

**Bedtime routine**

Bedtime ritual • Lights out

Calming bedtime rituals are essential for getting a good night's sleep, according to experts at Harvard Medical School. We tend to be pretty good at putting a bedtime routine in place for our kids. But our own habits may differ. We can't load up on chocolate or binge-watch *Game of Thrones* and expect to sleep well.

Create a calm bedtime ritual for yourself: Light reading, a nice bath, a guided meditation, or listening to soft music are all great options.

Plugging things into a schedule helps us feel in control of our day, as we know what we need to do and what is coming next.

Creating a realistic schedule that includes work, projects, fun and self-care during these strange times—or anytime—will help put you back into your seat of “influence.” It will provide you with some “control” in your life, helping you feel more calm, relaxed, and resilient in the face of anything that comes your way.

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# We're Making Memories

by Tammy-Lynn McNabb, RHNC

The COVID-19 crisis has challenged, changed, and redefined how families have spent time together at home. We have adapted to new methods of working or schooling, learnt new skills, and may have collectively eaten more meals together than we have in a lifetime. We have tackled stress and anxiety, and we have come to the realization that life might not ever be quite the same. As parents, we have been required to parent, teach, and coach our children all while managing our own workloads and self-care. Through all this craziness, we have also seen shortages in flour and yeast, proving that we are not only in this together, but also together in our kitchens!

Times of nostalgia, in one form or another, are often related to cooking and food. Some of the greatest gifts we could have received, holding significant memories and importance in our lives, are recipes passed down through generations. If we are lucky, these difficult times have given us opportunities to open old family recipe boxes for the first time in years, bringing back dishes that our parents and grandparents used to enjoy. Perhaps we already called grandma to get her scrumptious cookie recipe? We find ourselves recreating favorite deserts our mom used to make, trying to make pasta for the very first time, and baking bread that takes hours of kneading and rising, all in an effort to occupy our time. These are delicious, nutritious, entertaining, and no longer overlooked due to busy schedules.

## *An Activity with and for Your Family*

Wouldn't it be great to find an activity that keeps everyone busy and provides enjoyment and documents your family's recent experience in a positive light? An activity that helps your children create a positive memory to be revisited in years to come? Why not create your own family cookbook? You can challenge each of your children (and adults too) to contact relatives

for past favourites, and do some research to find new creations. Make them for the family, take a picture, and ultimately create a unique family cookbook.

Many online websites can help amateur cooks organize their recipes and create their own personal cookbooks. They provide fun and simple steps to guide anyone through the process. Some even offer the option to order professionally printed copies.

Creating a family cookbook can be a cherished gift to be passed on for generations to come. It will also teach your children to understand what goes into making a meal healthy and how certain ingredients are better choices than others. You could go one step further and have them include footnotes to their recipe, depicting how COVID is impacting your family and community from their perspective. Here are some guidelines and suggestions to get started.

## Your Family Cookbook

1. Start by trying to use ingredients already available in your home—the pantry, fridge and freezer—with no shopping for additional items. This will not only use forgotten items, but also allow them to be creative and learn substitution in their cooking.

- How flaxseed meal can replace an egg
- How milk and vinegar can be a substitute for buttermilk
- Swapping zucchini for pasta noodles

Knowing your ingredients and their role in cooking makes for a better and healthier cook and provides an appreciation for the ingredients we use. As they progress, teach them to plan their recipes ahead of time and add required ingredients to the shopping list.

2. Their meals should meet a particular nutritional threshold—high in fibre, low in sodium, sugar-free, etc.
3. Their recipes should be original in some way, giving the dish their own personal twist.
4. Kids should include at least one recipe that they could take to school with them when it starts again—something beyond a sandwich or green salad. This will allow them to appreciate the time and thought that go into lunch-making, but will also enable them to understand why certain ingredients like peanuts are banned from school and how to navigate around them in a recipe.
5. If you choose to include the time-capsule twist, kids could write about what was happening in the news that day; their interpretation of a significant moment in time, as they lived through it. Add an image of the event, and a photo of them!

Coordinate your family cookbook into easy to navigate sections: Breakfast, Back to School Lunches, Dinner, Healthy Snacks, COVID Cravings, Grandma's Recipes, etc. Include an optimistic Party Favourites section! And if printing, be sure to leave some blank pages at the end of each section so you can add to it beyond the COVID lockdown. Encourage your kids to continue cooking in the kitchen with you as often as you can. By creating a fun experience for your family, you will have set the grounds of healthy eating and independent cooking in the future. A lifelong skill that they will appreciate and thank you for encouraging them to do.

## Summer Plans Turned Upside Down?

Summer plans may have been turned upside-down as well. Regardless of the situation with borders opening, we may not be in a financial position to travel anywhere this summer. You may need to change vacation plans to “staycation” plans. It is essential to discover new ways to safely entertain our children while taking advantage of the outdoors. In sticking with the family cookbook concept, you can explore local markets or farms to purchase produce that can be brought back home for a family meal. What a treat for young children to pick their own food and better

understand where it comes from. A day of berry-picking can lead to a weekend of making family jam recipes, learning how to sweeten with less sugar using natural sweeteners. Pickling and fermenting food after a day at a farm or creating canning recipes from your garden can have great rewards. Talk to kids about the health benefits of fermented foods on our gut health. Be sure to add instructions for canning, pickling, and preserving your favourites to the family cookbook!



Explore your extended community and province this summer, discovering all they have to offer while creating a family cookbook of delicious recipes, complete with memories to be enjoyed for generations to come.



**Tammy-Lynn McNabb, RHNC**

A Registered Holistic Nutrition Counselor and television host/producer of *Health Wellness & Lifestyle*

TV. She believes that eating healthy shouldn't be difficult and should never compromise taste.



# Electrolyte-Replacing Foods to Eat this Summer

## Naturopathic Considerations

by Dr. Michelle Lo, ND and  
Dr. Melissa Cornish, HHC

As summer wears on, the long hot days fade into warm nights. For those of you who spend a lot of time outside, it can seem like you never really get a break from the heat. Hopefully, when you really get hot you can find some air conditioning, get into a shady spot, or cool off in some water. It is also important that you have plenty of cool water to drink, otherwise you can quickly become dehydrated and risk developing heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Heat exhaustion is characterized by fatigue, headache, weakness, dizziness, nausea, muscle aches or cramps, excessive thirst, slow or weakened heartbeat, fainting, confusion or anxiety, agitation, and drenching sweats, often accompanied by cold, clammy skin or a sensation of prickly skin.

There are two main causes for heat exhaustion. The first is being dehydrated. Excessive sweating without replenishing lost fluids, especially if you started out dehydrated, can quickly lead to severe dehydration and heat exhaustion. The second cause is salt and mineral depletion. Salt and other minerals are present in your sweat, so excessive sweating can result in depleted minerals, which can lead to muscle cramps, dizziness, nausea, and vomiting.

Heat stroke is a more severe condition, which—if left untreated—could become life-threatening. Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke, although it could come on without the symptoms of heat exhaustion. During heat stroke, the body is unable to cool itself properly; internal body temperature can be between 104 °F (40 °C) and 106 °F (41 °C) or higher. Symptoms of heat stroke include throbbing headache; red, hot, and dry skin; lack of sweating; rapid, shallow breathing; rapid heartbeat; dizziness and light-headedness; nausea and vomiting; behavioural changes such as confusion, disorientation, or staggering; unconsciousness; and seizures.

Some conditions that can lead to both heat exhaustion and heat stroke are hot temperatures with high humidity; intense or strenuous physical work; high blood pressure; smoking or tobacco use; drug abuse; heavy or long-term alcohol use; liver or kidney conditions; heart disease; obesity; underlying conditions that increase the chances of dehydration, including diabetes or hyperglycemia; and certain medications that increase the risk of dehydration, including medications for depression, insomnia, allergies, and poor circulation. Infants and children under 4 years old and adults over 65 years old are especially at risk, since their body is not as efficient at cooling itself.

If someone is suffering from heat stroke, seek medical attention immediately. You can also begin cooling the body down by dousing with cold water or placing ice packs behind the neck, under the armpits, and in the groin area.



Fortunately, there are ways to not only survive the heat, but even to do well in the heat. With a little preplanning, you can enjoy the summer while keeping yourself and your family safe. Plan for the day's activities by putting plenty of water and some electrolyte-replacing foods and drinks in a cooler with ice. Below, you will find recommendations on what to take with you. Make sure you take enough for everyone in your group.

First and foremost, staying hydrated is an absolute must. Whether you are playing or working, make sure you take the time to drink water often. Plain cool or cold water is what your body needs the most. During profuse sweating, an electrolyte-recovery drink, commonly referred to as a sports drink, can help replace lost salt and minerals (electrolytes). These drinks are very effective at quickly helping your body recover, especially if you feel that you just can't drink enough water to satisfy your thirst. The combination of electrolytes and sugar in water allows your body to immediately send it to your cells for use. Make sure that you continue drinking water between sports drinks to keep your kidneys hydrated and to prevent them from working too hard to filter excess electrolytes and sugar out of your body. Whether you buy premade electrolyte drinks or make your own, avoid artificial sweeteners; natural sweeteners make the drink effective. Natural sweeteners include sugar, fruit juice, honey, and other natural syrups.

A lot of tasty foods can help you stay hydrated while providing electrolytes in a form that your body can easily utilize. Fruit is a refreshing summer treat which provides water, natural sugar in the form of fructose, antioxidants, and important minerals (electrolytes).

Watermelon not only contains a lot of water, but it is also rich in electrolytes—and of course, it is wonderfully sweet. For a quick snack, cut the watermelon into bite-sized pieces before you leave home. Don't forget to pack the salt if you like yours salty sweet. Pineapple is another good choice for refreshing a hot and weary body. Sweet and juicy, it also contains the enzyme bromelain which helps fight muscle fatigue and inflammation. Once again, prepare the pineapple before you leave home for immediate snacking.

Oranges and other citrus fruits are high in electrolytes and are also naturally refreshing; they can be eaten by the slice or squeezed into water. Kiwi fruit is high in potassium, an important electrolyte. Prepare them at home by scrubbing the skin under water with a vegetable brush; you can slice them or leave them whole. By eating the skin, you get the added benefit of extra fibre which helps stabilize blood sugar.

Quite a few vegetables can also help you fight dehydration and the heat. Cucumbers are refreshing eaten by the slice or by adding slices to water. Celery is 95% water and offers electrolytes such as potassium, sodium, magnesium, calcium, and phosphorus. Try dipping celery in peanut butter or other nut butters, or hummus for even more electrolytes (plus energy-



sustaining protein and healthy plant-based fats). A salad chocked full of lettuce and veggies like carrots, tomatoes, and mushrooms can provide a refreshing boost in the middle of the day. Top with roasted and salted sunflower seeds, raisins, and olives for added flavour. Toss with a dressing made from apple-cider vinegar to round out the electrolyte content. If a salad does not sound like something you want to mess with, consider using lettuce leaves to make wraps instead of using bread for sandwiches.

Besides drinking commercially-made sports drinks, you can make your own electrolyte-replacing sports drink with just a few ingredients. There are a lot of recipes on the internet, but here is a simple one:

- ¼ cup of lemon juice
- ¼ cup of lime juice
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 whole squeezed orange (or one frozen can of orange juice)
- 1 litre of water

Hint: If this is a little too tart for you or the kids, add some honey or pineapple juice.

Coconut water is full of electrolytes and is naturally sweet, making it an instantly refreshing. Apple-cider vinegar can quickly help you recover, with potassium and magnesium. Try mixing a tablespoon of it in a glass of water along with a teaspoon of honey. *Aloe vera* juice is not only good for cooling hot skin, but it is also cooling to the body when taken internally. By itself, aloe juice tends to be bitter, so mix a tablespoon in juice or water with lemon and honey.



Once you are out of the heat for the day, consider consuming some form of organic, grass-fed dairy. Milk, cheese, yogurt, and kefir are all good sources of electrolytes. I recommend not eating dairy while you are feeling very hot, as it could lead to stomach discomfort.

Perhaps one of the biggest things that you can do to help prevent heat-related illnesses is to make sure that you are properly hydrated to begin with before heading out into the heat. Avoid alcohol and caffeine, since

they both act as diuretics.

Excessive alcohol consumption before, during, and after being in the heat can also deplete your body of electrolytes. Along with starting out and staying hydrated, avoid wearing heavy, tight-fitting clothes, and limit time spent in places where there is little air flow such as vehicles or buildings without proper ventilation.

When the temperature and humidity get high, remember to take breaks often, sit or lie in the shade, and drink plenty of water. Watch each other for signs of overheating, especially children and the elderly. If you are alone, pay attention to how you are feeling and whether you are sweating. Finally, if you have an opportunity to cool down by getting in the water or air conditioning, do it! You will be happy you did. Have a happy and safe summer!



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

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# Improve Diabetes with Low-Carbohydrate and Ketogenic Diets

by Guillaume Landry, MS, Naturopath

For people with diabetes, strict sugar control is a daily reality which may lead them to consider following a low-carbohydrate or keto diet. Its rise in popularity is science-driven as a nutritional solution clearly revealing benefits for diabetics, both insulin-dependent (aka type 1) and type 2 (also called fatty, sweet, or non-insulin-dependent). In this context, a wave of institutional recognition is spreading worldwide, with Diabetes UK in 2017, then Diabetes Australia and the American Diabetes Association. This year, Diabetes Canada took a stand in favour of this nutritional therapy which is now considered a full-fledged component of quality diabetes care. Indeed, the evidence for its effectiveness—and cost-effectiveness—is particularly strong in light of blood-sugar management, weight control, and the reduced need for medication.

But what exactly is a “low-carbohydrate diet”? The Canadian report places the upper limit on carbohydrate intake at 130 g/d and acknowledges that very-low-carb diets—defined as providing less than 50 g/d of carbohydrates—would be even more effective. The ketogenic diet is placed in this category, with carbohydrate intakes between 20 and 50 g/d depending on personal profiles, so it bodes well for the diabetic population, especially insulin-dependent (type 1) diabetes. The restrictive nature of this diet as well as the risks of hypoglycemia and deficiencies in certain nutrients make the ketogenic diet a “naturopathic must” for type 1 diabetes, yet following it requires the professional monitoring of a health-care practitioner. As for type 2 diabetes, it should be approached from a nutritional point of view with a low-carbohydrate diet—which is less strict than the ketogenic diet—or a Mediterranean diet. Finally, physical activity, stress management, as well as quality sleep and a clean environment ideally complement the lifestyle required to improve the wellbeing of anyone with diabetes.



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# Front-Line Love



Media attention has shed a well-earned light on health-care practitioners putting themselves in harm's way. Grassroots initiatives throughout our country have spawned everything from lawn signs to food donations thanking them for their courage and strength in keeping Canadians safe.

One such program was a gratitude box initiative by *Health Wellness & Lifestyle TV*. Contents spanned from organic comfort food and snacks to Quercetin, a powerful antioxidant donated by New Roots Herbal. One thousand boxes are being given away to first responders in British Columbia:

- Peace Arch Covid Clinic
- Royal Columbian Hospital Covid Clinic and First Line Responders
- Ridgemoor Hospital Foundation First Responders Organization
- BC Children's Hospital
- Ronald McDonald House
- RCMP Outreach Team and Community Unit





# YUM Delux Kale Chips with Pumpkin Seed Protein

*No grains, gluten, dairy, soy, nuts, legume, eggs, nightshade, citrus,  
or gum; vegan, paleo- and keto-friendly*

## Ingredients

- 4 cups baby or destemmed kale, firmly packed
- ½ cup New Roots Herbal's Heart Smart Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- ⅓ cup water
- ⅓ cup nutritional yeast
- ¼ cup sunflower or sesame seeds
- 3 tbsp. New Roots Herbal's Pumpkin Seed Protein powder
- 2 tbsp. gluten-free tamari or coconut aminos
- 2 tbsp. apple cider vinegar (unfiltered, with the mother)
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice (with pulp, if desired)
- 1 garlic clove
- ¼ red bell pepper, cut into pieces (optional)
- ¼ tsp. Cayenne pepper (optional)
- 2 tbsp. hemp seeds (reserve)

## Instructions

Place kale in a large bowl. Blend all of the other ingredients, except the hemp seeds, together until creamy. Pour the sauce over the kale and, with your hands, massage thoroughly into the kale.

Spread the dressed kale out onto a dehydrator tray, on a parchment-lined baking sheet, or on a silicone mat. The mixture will be mushier than you would expect, but this is important to make the final chips extra yummy, luscious, colourful, and flavourful. Sprinkle with the reserved hemp seeds.

Dehydrate for 24–48 hours, or until the chips are the desired texture. If you don't have a dehydrator, use the oven dehydration method (below). The low-temperature dehydration helps the chips retain their awesome nutritional value, respects the omega-3 oils in the hemp seeds, and keeps their lovely colour.

**Theresa's Chef Tip:** The mixture used to marinate the kale is really yummy and is adaptable for many other uses. It can be used as a dip with crudites, crackers, or chips, as well as a flavourful sauce to add to wraps or sandwiches. The mixture can also be used as a delicious dressing for a kale or arugula salad.

**Oven Dehydration Method:** If you don't yet have a dehydrator, you can still make this recipe using your oven. Set your oven at its lowest temperature (on most ovens, this is usually around 150 °F or 65 °C) and prop the door open slightly, perhaps using a wooden spoon to help it stay in position. While this isn't the most energy-conserving method, it is a great alternative until you are able to get a dehydrator. Once you learn about all the wonderful things you can make with these amazing machines, you will definitely put it on your gift wish-list!



**Theresa Nicassio, PhD, Psychologist**

Theresa is a wellness educator, radio host, and the award-winning author of *YUM: Plant-Based Recipes for a Gluten-Free Diet*.

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



# Vegan Chocolate Ice Cream

I think you'll love my easy vegan chocolate ice cream recipe! I've made this ice cream a handful of times and it never stays around for long. It also stays scoopable in the freezer!

## Ingredients

- 1 can full-fat coconut milk
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup maple syrup
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cacao powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup dark chocolate chips/chunks
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp. salt

## Instructions

Blend all **but** the chocolate chips in a blender until smooth. Place the chocolate chips into a heat-proof bowl set over a pot of hot water on the stove.

Pour the liquid over the top and allow the mixture to heat up, melting the chocolate. Whisk every few minutes. Do not boil; just heat to melt the chocolate. Pour the liquid into a large bowl and place in the fridge until well chilled, at least 8 hours.

Process through an ice-cream maker (it'll be like soft serve at this point), and then transfer it into a container and place into the freezer for at least 4 hours to firm up a bit more.

I drizzled chocolate sauce, freeze-dried raspberries, and sliced almonds on top. It was absolutely delicious!

Gives 3–4 servings.



**Heather Pace**

A classically trained chef turned raw-dessert chef, she is a travel bug, a chocoholic, and a certified yoga instructor.

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

# Mango and Coconut Cream Popsicles

with Fermented Turmeric and Ginger

## Ingredients

- 1 cup of coconut cream
- 1 cup of pureed mango with 1 tbsp. of honey and 1 tbsp. of lemon juice (or fruit of your choice)
- 2 tbsp. of favourite granola (for bottom of each mold)
- 2 tsp. of honey, maple syrup, or natural syrup of your choice
- 1 tsp. of New Roots Herbal's Fermented Turmeric
- 1 tsp. of New Roots Herbal's Fermented Ginger
- Pinch of cinnamon
- Small pinch of black pepper (helps activate turmeric's anti-inflammatory benefits)

## Instructions

Blend all **but** the pureed mango and granola together until smooth.

In your popsicle mold, add 2 tbsp. of your favourite granola in to each mold.

Alternate adding coconut cream mixture and fruit puree mixture.

Place in freezer until set (about 3 hours) and enjoy!

For a refreshing tropical drink, pour over ice (alternating cream and fruit in layers) and garnish with granola!

**Alternative Flavours:** Add other pureed fruit in place of one of the cups of mango puree for additional flavours—berries taste super and are low in sugar and high in fibre!

**Helpful Tip:** Many fruits can be frozen while in season and used later on. This recipe works well with frozen fruit as well.

Makes 6 popsicles.



**Tammy-Lynn McNabb, RHNC**

A Registered Holistic Nutrition Counselor and television host/producer of *Health Wellness & Lifestyle TV*. She believes that eating healthy shouldn't be difficult and should never compromise taste.



# AskGord



*Everyone at home is snapping at each other. I think the stress is getting to us. Any natural product suggestions to help cope with this so-called "new normal"?*

Any Google search will give you well-researched lists of behaviours to employ, which include getting adequate sleep, eating well, and keeping active. There are also various natural supplements you could explore. B-complex vitamins, rhodiola, passionflower, lavender oil, L-theanine, melatonin, and *gamma*-aminobutyric acid (GABA) have been shown to help. You can explore them à la carte or in methodically developed formulas. Remember to follow label instructions and seek the advice of a health-care practitioner, especially if things are getting too difficult.

You can refer to a couple of articles on the *Flourish* blog page for lifestyle tips to deal with stress:

[newrootsherbal.com/en/blog/lifestyle-wellness/tips-for-less-stress-this-summer](https://newrootsherbal.com/en/blog/lifestyle-wellness/tips-for-less-stress-this-summer)

[newrootsherbal.com/en/blog/lifestyle-wellness/tips-for-less-stress-this-spring](https://newrootsherbal.com/en/blog/lifestyle-wellness/tips-for-less-stress-this-spring)

*I've decided to take this lockdown opportunity to stop dying my hair and finally go grey. Any suggestions to ease the transition?*

Good for you! Hair grows at a rate of approximately six inches (15 cm) per year, so time is on your side. Hair follicles have specific cells which produce melanin, giving hair its unique colour. Grey hair is the result of these cells dying off, which is primarily hereditary, yet can be influenced by vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and even stress. A lack of vitamins B<sub>6</sub> or B<sub>12</sub>, biotin, or vitamins D or E can all contribute to premature greying.

Dying longer hair a transitional grey can help, or discover your inner Jamie Lee Curtis or Meryl Streep with a new short style. Either way, remember that your hair needs to feel the love more than ever. Condition with some organic argan oil or nourish it from within by adding a liquid silica supplement. Both can contribute to great looking locks.

All the best in going gracefully grey!

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

# Flourish

## Blog Preview

Visit our blog to  
subscribe to our  
newsletter!

For more articles on health, lifestyle, and wellness—add to that delicious recipes!—all in a more dynamic and accessible format, visit our blog in the upcoming weeks at [flourishbodyandmind.com](http://flourishbodyandmind.com)



### A Natural Approach to PMS

Naturopath Christine Novokowsky examines the physical, mental, and sociological impact of premenstrual syndrome. Her comprehensive discussion touches on vitamin, mineral, nutritional and behavioral interventions which can help alleviate the symptoms of PMS.



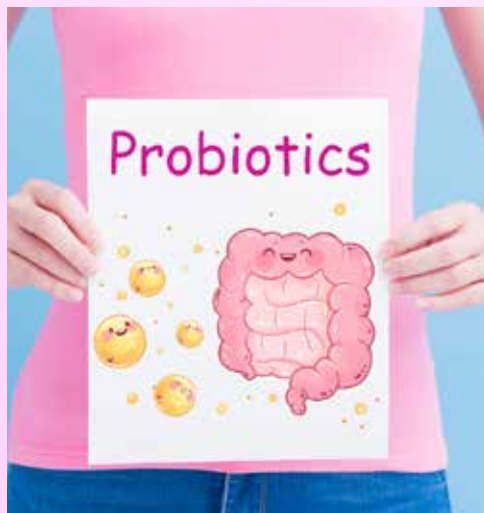
### This Recipe is “the Bomb”

Chocolate beet fat bombs are ideal to increase healthy fat intake, especially for those on a plant-based diet. Their decadent flavour profile is complemented with the rich taste and health benefits of fermented beet powder.



### Joint Pain and Walking on Egg Shells

Discover the science behind a novel nutraceutical isolated from natural eggshell membrane (NEM®), and how it can benefit connective tissue to relieve joint pain.



## Probiotic Survey

[flourishbodyandmind.com/probiotic-survey](http://flourishbodyandmind.com/probiotic-survey)

We'd like to know what you're looking for in a probiotic supplement.

Participate in our survey for the chance to win one of five amazing prizes including an Aromatherapy Gift Set, an assortment of organic essential oils, and a selection of exotic oils.

Visit [flourishbodyandmind.com/probiotic-survey](http://flourishbodyandmind.com/probiotic-survey) and complete the survey before August 15, 2020, to be entered. The first 200 respondents who complete the survey will be eligible to win.

Due to the format, we can only offer participation to this survey online. Looking forward to hearing from you!

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback since our last issue. We are sending a 450 g bottle of New Roots Herbal's organic Pumpkin Seed Protein to our lucky winner, Dianna K. of Palmerston, Ontario.



-MAKE LIFE BETTER-



# Making Probiotic Therapy Better!

## Live Cells, Delivered as Promised!

- Researched and tested in an ISO 17025–accredited lab •
- Refrigerated to preserve lifespan of living active cells •
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