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The SWAP—Strawberry
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TREAT ASTHMA NATURALLY

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DR. JORDAN KERNER
ND

Practice: The Cancer Naturopath
drjordankerner.com

Focus: Mental health, digestive health, adolescent and adult cancer

Fan of: Chasing waterfalls and hiking

Tip: You can't pour from an empty cup, so practice self-care!

On my shelf: Rhoziva (a Rhodiola extract)

MAGNESIUM/HAIR LOSS

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DR. AILYA PATEL
ND, IBCLC

Practice: Footprints Therapy
footprints.ca

Focus: Pregnancy, postpartum care, lactation, and pediatrics

Fan of: Woodworking and repurposing furniture

Tip: Get outside every day!

On my shelf: Vitamin D3 with K2

HYDRATION FOR ATHLETES

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DR. DAINA PATEL
BSc, DC

Practice: Dr. Daina Patel, DC, Toronto
drdainapatel.com

Focus: Chronic pain, wellness, and prevention

Fan of: Yoga and meditation

Tip: Movement is medicine!

On my shelf: Magnesium, lavender oil

YARROW

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MARY CHARTERIS
BScN, RN, RH

Practice: Registered nurse, registered herbalist

Focus: Digestion, immune health, and mental wellness

Fan of: Fresh fish cooked over a fire

Tip: Bare feet on the earth!

On my shelf: Lemon, ginger, sea salt, reishi

ACUPUNCTURE PRACTICES

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MARY BASKWELL
R.TCMP, R.Ac, RPN

Practice: The Root Natural Health Clinic | 905-990-8100 | theroot.ca

Focus: General practice, mental health, gynecology, and fertility

Fan of: Hiking, yoga, crafting my own teas, creams, and tinctures

Tip: Simply breathe with awareness!

On my shelf: Herbs, crystals, books

WHAT ARE FIBROIDS?

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SHELBY SLY

Practice: Second year naturopathic medical student

Focus: Personalised health guided by empathy and kindness

Fan of: Coffee shops & my mom's baked goods

Tip: Fresh air in the morning!

On my shelf: *The seven spiritual laws of success*

WHAT ARE FIBROIDS?

PAGE 30

JENSEN PLETCH

Practice: CCNM medical student
Instagram: @jensenndmed

Focus: Women's health and evidence-based primary care medicine

Fan of: Skiing, hockey & board games

Tip: Engage in strength-based exercise every day!

On my shelf: Vitamin D & omega-3

WHAT ARE FIBROIDS?

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DR. ALISA MURLI
ND & Birth Doula

Practice: GTA, Downtown Toronto, Durham Region | dralisamurli.com

Focus: Hormones, prenatal, postpartum, and pediatrics

Fan of: Dogs, crafting, and food

Tip: Balance is key to healthy living!

On my shelf: Magnesium

SKIN CARE & HAIR REMOVAL

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ALI HUSON
ND Candidate

Practice: All Systems Wellness, Windsor, Ontario

Focus: General practice with an interest in mental and metabolic health

Fan of: Reading

Tip: Try a new hobby every 6 months!

On my shelf: L-theanine and books

DRINKS FOR SLEEP/RECIPES

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ANGELA MOSCARELLI
CPA, CA, RHN

Practice: Guided Wellness
guidedwellness.ca

Focus: Helping busy professionals
optimise their health

Fan of: Gardening, fitness, and nature

Tip: A healthy lifestyle is about balance!

On my shelf: Spirulina, lemons,
fermented coconut milk

THE SWAP

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MARIA D'ALESSANDRO
RHN

Practice: Miala | www.miala.ca

Focus: Women's health, menstrual
cycle, and endometriosis

Fan of: Walking my dog Apollo &
reformer Pilates

Tip: Everything in moderation!

On my shelf: Magnesium &
L-Glutamine

THE FAMILY TABLE

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DR. SARAH WHITE
ND

Practice: Replete Wellness (virtual)
repletewellness.com

Focus: Fertility, anti-aging, and skin
health

Fan of: Raising chickens and gardening

Tip: Morning healthy fats and protein!

On my shelf: Liposomal glutathione,
curcumin

DID YOU KNOW?

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MELODY MAIER
CNP

Practice: Holistic Whisk
holisticwhisk.com

Focus: Acne-focused nutrition and
women's health

Fan of: Homemade nut milk, and a
good book

Tip: Always be kind to yourself!

On my shelf: Matcha, magnesium

"EVERY TIME YOU
EAT OR DRINK,
YOU ARE EITHER
FEEDING DISEASE
OR FIGHTING IT."

—Heather Morgan

Illustration: KosOlga / DepositPhoto.com

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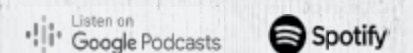
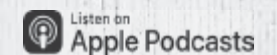


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Ask a Naturopath

HOW TO TREAT ASTHMA NATURALLY Understanding the Link Between Allergies and Asthma

Dr. Jordan Kerner, ND

With the warm weather ramping up for a hot summer, you may have noticed an uptick your child's allergies and asthma. Summer allergies are common, particularly to grass and ragweed pollen, and can lead to an aggravation of conditions like asthma—but these allergies are something that can largely be prevented!

Parents seeking holistic ways to help their child's breathing often ask if there are natural supports that are safe with conventional treatments; the simple answer is *absolutely*! By addressing inflammation, strengthening immune function, and reducing sensitivity to allergens, we can strengthen lung health. Subsequently, natural therapies can help provide significant relief and reduce the need for rescue medications by treating the allergy triggers behind asthma.

CONVENTIONAL TREATMENTS FOR ASTHMA

Allergies and asthma are closely connected, with many children experiencing both as a response known as allergic asthma. Exposure to allergens including pollen, dust mites, pet dander, and mold can trigger airway inflammation and constriction, leading to asthma symptoms such as wheezing, coughing, and shortness of breath. Conventional treatment focuses on controlling both allergic reactions and asthma symptoms to prevent flare-ups and maintain normal lung function.

Medications such as antihistamines can reduce allergic reactions, corticosteroids (inhaled, oral) can manage inflammation, and bronchodilators (puffers, tablets) act to relax airway muscles for easier breathing. Leukotriene inhibitors, which target inflammatory pathways involved in both allergies and asthma, can also be effective. These treatments help control symptoms, but many parents seek additional natural approaches to support lung health and control. Understanding how these medications work can help us understand how to support respiratory health naturally.

NATURAL SUPPLEMENTS & TREATMENTS FOR ASTHMA & ALLERGY CONTROL

Always consult with a healthcare professional before starting a supplement to ensure appropriate dosages.

Quercetin

A powerful flavonoid found in apples, onions, and berries, quercetin helps stabilise mast cells, preventing the release of histamine—a key factor in allergic reactions and asthma flare-ups. Quercetin also has strong anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties that support lung health.

Child Dose: 50–200 mg two to three times daily (consult a healthcare provider for age-specific dosing).

Magnesium

Magnesium plays a vital role in muscle relaxation, including the smooth muscles of the airways. Studies have shown that children who have higher levels of magnesium in their blood have a lower risk of asthma. Foods rich in magnesium include leafy greens, nuts, and seeds.

Child Dose: 50–100 mg for younger children, 100–240 mg for older children

Vitamin D

Low levels of vitamin D are associated with increased asthma severity. Interestingly, about 25 percent of Canadian children have insufficient vitamin D levels.¹ Vitamin D plays a crucial role in reducing inflammation and allergic sensitivity and in regulating our immune response. Daily sun exposure and vitamin D supplementation can support lung function and decrease the frequency of asthma attacks.

Child Dose: 400–1000 IU per day, depending on age and vitamin D status

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

The cornerstone of any inflammation associated treatment plan, is high potency fish oil (containing EPA and DHA) and/or flaxseeds (containing ALA) which are known to improve lung function by reducing inflammation. It is suggested that a higher intake of omega-3s can result in fewer asthma symptoms and further reduce our reliance on medications.

Child Dose: 500–1000 mg of EPA and DHA

N-Acetylcysteine (NAC)

NAC is known for its ability to break down mucous and reduce oxidative stress in the lungs. It is a precursor (i.e. the liver converts this) to glutathione, a powerful antioxidant that can be particularly helpful for children with asthma and allergies who experience excessive mucus production.

Child Dose: 200–600 mg daily

Probiotics

A healthy gut microbiome plays a crucial role in immune system regulation. Probiotic supplements, particularly those containing *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium* strains, can help reduce allergic reactions and inflammation-associated with asthma.

Child Dose: At least 4 billion CFU of *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *bifidus*

Butterbur (*Petasites hybridus*)

Butterbur has been studied for its ability to reduce allergic rhinitis, a common trigger for asthma attacks. It acts as a natural antihistamine and anti-inflammatory, helping to keep airways open.

Child Dose: Typically, 50 mg twice daily (PA-free)

Bromelain

Bromelain is an anti-inflammatory enzyme that is derived from pineapples and can help improve airway function and reduce mucous buildup. It may help alleviate nasal congestion and support respiratory health in those with allergies and asthma.

Child Dose: 80–250 mg twice daily, taken between meals

LIFESTYLE & DIETARY CONSIDERATIONS

Beyond supplements, dietary and lifestyle adjustments can play a critical role in managing asthma.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the benefit of at-home HEPA filters on reducing allergic and asthmatic episodes. Even if it's just in a bedroom, we spend about 1/3 of our lives asleep, and HEPA filters are proven to reduce airborne particulate counts and improve asthma control and quality of life.²

Reducing mucous forming foods, such as dairy products, fried foods, refined flours (whole or multi instead of white bread) can support lung health. Similarly, increasing intake of fresh fruits, vegetables, and anti-inflammatory foods can support allergic and asthmatic control. Identifying and eliminating common dietary triggers such as dairy, gluten, and artificial additives may also improve asthma symptoms, which is best done through a guided elimination diet with a healthcare professional.

When dealing with asthma, conventional medications play a vital role in allergy and asthma management and *should not* be discouraged. However, integrative natural therapies can provide much needed additional support in the treatment of the root cause of these conditions and improve the quality of life of children. Much like any medication, it's essential to consult with a regulated healthcare provider before starting any supplement to ensure these medications are not only safe together, but also they can work synergistically to provide optimal asthma and allergy control! By combining the best of both worlds, parents can help their children to breathe easier and empower them to live healthier and more active lives! 🌱

For references visit ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM25

MAGNESIUM & KIDS' ALLERGIES

Supporting Asthma, Eczema and Rhinitis

Dr. Ailya Patel, ND

Magnesium is an important yet often overlooked mineral in children's health. It plays a crucial role in over 300 biochemical processes in the body, including those involved in muscle relaxation, nerve function, energy production, and immune regulation. Emerging research suggests that magnesium may have an impact on allergic conditions such as asthma, eczema (atopic dermatitis), and allergic rhinitis.

“... ENSURING CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE MAGNESIUM, PARTICULARLY THROUGH A NUTRIENT-RICH DIET, OFFERS A SIMPLE, EVIDENCE-INFORMED STRATEGY TO HELP REDUCE ALLERGIC REACTIONS ...

With rates of childhood allergies and immune disorders on the rise, it's more important than ever to understand how nutrition and nutrient status may influence a child's risk and symptom expression.

MAGNESIUM & IMMUNE FUNCTION

The immune system is our body's defence mechanism, protecting us from viruses, bacteria, and other harmful invaders. But in children with allergies, the immune system can overreact to otherwise harmless substances like pollen, pet dander, or certain foods.

Magnesium plays a key role in regulating the immune system and calming this overactivity. It helps maintain a balance between the different arms of the immune response (innate and adaptive immunity) and helps regulate inflammation by modulating the release of cytokines—chemical messengers that tell the body when and how to react.

When magnesium levels are too low, studies have shown an increase in pro-inflammatory cytokines, such as interleukin-6 (IL-6) and tumour necrosis factor-alpha (TNF-α), both of which are involved in allergic reactions.¹ This means a child deficient in magnesium might experience more intense allergy symptoms, more frequent flare-ups, and heightened inflammation.

MAGNESIUM & ASTHMA

Asthma is a chronic condition that affects the lungs and airways, making breathing difficult, especially during physical

activity or exposure to allergens. For many children, asthma begins in early childhood and can significantly impact their quality of life.

Magnesium has natural bronchodilator effects, meaning it helps relax the muscles around the airways and makes it easier to breathe. It does this by acting as a natural calcium blocker, preventing excessive muscle contraction in the airways. A randomised controlled trial found that oral magnesium supplementation improved lung function and reduced bronchial hyperresponsiveness in children with mild to moderate asthma.²

In hospital settings, intravenous magnesium sulphate is sometimes used in emergencies to treat acute asthma attacks, especially when children don't respond to traditional inhalers.³ This highlights how powerful magnesium can be in supporting respiratory health.

Moreover, studies show that children with lower dietary magnesium intake are more likely to experience more severe asthma symptoms and reduced lung function.⁴ Ensuring adequate magnesium intake may help reduce flare-ups and improve day-to-day breathing in children living with asthma.

MAGNESIUM & ATOPIC DERMATITIS

Atopic dermatitis, commonly referred to as eczema, is a chronic inflammatory skin condition that often starts in infancy or early childhood. It's characterised by red, dry, and itchy skin that can flare up with allergens, stress, or changes in weather.

Magnesium contributes to skin health in several important ways. First, it supports the skin's natural barrier by influencing lipid production and hydration. Second, it helps reduce inflammation by modulating the immune response and reducing oxidative stress, two key contributors to eczema flares.

Research suggests that magnesium deficiency may worsen allergic skin conditions by increasing oxidative stress and the release of pro-inflammatory cytokines.⁵ While more clinical studies are needed, many families find that increasing magnesium intake, either through diet, baths, or supplements, can help reduce the frequency and intensity of flare-ups.

MAGNESIUM & ALLERGIC RHINITIS

Allergic rhinitis, often called hay fever, affects many children and presents with symptoms such as sneezing, nasal

congestion, itchy eyes, and runny nose, especially during spring, when pollen is abundant.

Magnesium may help ease these symptoms due to its anti-inflammatory effects and ability to relax smooth muscle tissue in the nasal passages. A study found that children with allergic rhinitis had significantly lower blood levels of magnesium compared to their healthy peers.⁶ Another study showed that magnesium supplementation helped reduce nasal inflammation and improved lung function in patients with seasonal allergic rhinitis.⁷

Adding magnesium-rich foods to a child’s diet may offer gentle and ongoing support for managing seasonal allergies.

DAILY MAGNESIUM NEEDS FOR CHILDREN

The recommended dietary allowances for magnesium vary by age:

- » 1-3 years: 80 mg/day
- » 4-8 years: 130 mg/day
- » 9-13 years: 240 mg/day

Many children, especially choosy eaters, fall short of these targets. You can help increase magnesium intake by offering more whole, unprocessed foods.

Magnesium-rich foods include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| » Leafy greens (spinach, kale) | » Black beans, lentils |
| » Pumpkin and sunflower seeds | » Brown rice and quinoa |
| » Almonds, cashews | » Bananas and avocados |
| | » Dark chocolate (in moderation!) |

WHAT ABOUT MAGNESIUM SUPPLEMENTS?

While food is always the best source, some children may benefit from magnesium supplements, especially if they have allergies, frequent infections, or have limited dietary variety.

Key considerations for supplementation:

- » *Work with a practitioner:* Always consult a healthcare provider before starting supplements.
- » *Gentle forms:* Magnesium is available in various forms; glycinate and citrate are well absorbed and tolerated.
- » *Start low and go slow:* Too much magnesium at once can cause loose stools or stomach upset.
- » *Topical options:* Magnesium bath salts, oils, or lotions can be used for children who can’t tolerate oral forms.



SAFETY

Magnesium is generally safe when taken in appropriate amounts, but large doses can cause diarrhea, abdominal cramping, or low blood pressure. Stick to recommended doses and monitor your child for any signs of discomfort.

Although magnesium may not be the first nutrient that comes to mind when addressing childhood allergies, it holds significant potential in supporting children’s immune resilience. Its ability to regulate inflammation, support skin integrity, relax airway muscles, and modulate immune responses makes it a valuable ally in managing allergic conditions.

Emerging research points to magnesium’s role in improving asthma control, reducing the severity of atopic dermatitis, and easing symptoms of allergic rhinitis. While further studies are needed, ensuring children receive adequate magnesium, particularly through a nutrient-rich diet, offers a simple, evidence-informed strategy to help reduce allergic reactions and promote overall well-being.

Incorporating magnesium-rich foods into daily meals and using supplements when clinically appropriate empowers families to take proactive steps in allergy prevention and care. As always, personalised guidance from a licensed healthcare provider can help ensure that these strategies are both safe and effective for each child’s unique needs. 🌱

For references visit ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM25



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SPORTS & NUTRITION

Hydration for Athletes

FUELING PERFORMANCE
FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Dr. Daina Patel, BSc, DC



Getty Images / Unsplash+

As a chiropractor, I see firsthand how hydration impacts movement, recovery, and overall performance. Many athletes focus on training, nutrition, and rest, but underestimate the role of proper hydration in optimising their bodies.

“BY STAYING AHEAD OF DEHYDRATION WITH THE RIGHT FLUIDS AND ELECTROLYTES, YOU’LL RECOVER FASTER, PERFORM BETTER, AND REDUCE THE RISK OF CRAMPS OR INJURIES.”

Whether you're running a marathon, lifting weights, or playing sports in the summer heat, staying hydrated is key to keeping your body functioning at its best.

WHY DOES HYDRATION MATTER?

Water makes up about 60 percent of the human body and plays a crucial role in muscle function, joint lubrication, temperature regulation, and even cognitive performance.

When you sweat, you're not just losing water—you're also depleting essential electrolytes like sodium, potassium, magnesium, and calcium. These minerals help maintain muscle contractions, nerve signalling, and fluid balance. Without them, you're more prone to muscle cramps, fatigue, dizziness, and heat-related illnesses.

How Much Water Do You Need?

The standard advice of drinking eight glasses of water a day is a good baseline, but athletes need more. A better approach is to listen to your body and adjust based on activity level, weather, and sweat loss. A general guideline for active individuals is:

Before exercise: Drink 500–600 ml of water 2–3 hours before activity.

During exercise: Sip 200–300 ml of water every 15–20 minutes, adjusting for intensity and heat.

After exercise: Rehydrate with at least 500 ml of water for every pound of body weight lost through sweat.

WATER VS. ELECTROLYTES: WHAT'S BEST FOR HYDRATION?

While water is essential, sometimes it's not enough—especially for endurance athletes or those training in hot weather. Electrolytes help your body retain fluid and prevent dehydration. If you're sweating a lot or training for more than an hour, consider drinking coconut water as it's a natural source of potassium and sodium. You can also try a homemade electrolyte drink (see recipe below). Salty snacks paired with water can also help replenish sodium. Be careful of sports drinks as they can contain unwanted ingredients and large quantities of sugar.

Hydration isn't just about drinking water—it's about replenishing what your body loses during exercise. By staying ahead of dehydration with the right fluids and electrolytes, you'll

recover faster, perform better, and reduce the risk of cramps or injuries. With summer training in full swing, now's the time to dial in your hydration strategy and keep your body running smoothly.

Stay hydrated, stay strong, and keep moving!



laura chouette / Depositphotos.com

HYDRATION TIPS FOR HOT WEATHER TRAINING

With summer approaching, hydration becomes even more critical. Here are some quick tips to stay hydrated:

- 1. Pre-hydrate:** Start your day with a glass of water before coffee.
- 2. Use a hydration tracker:** Apps or water bottles with time markers can help ensure you're drinking enough.
- 3. Eat hydrating foods:** Watermelon, cucumbers, and oranges contribute to your daily water intake.
- 4. Adjust based on sweat levels:** If your sweat is salty or excessive, increase your electrolyte intake.

Recipe

CITRUS COCONUT ELECTROLYTE DRINK

Skip the artificial ingredients in commercial sports drinks and try this homemade electrolyte drink instead. It provides the hydration and essential minerals your body needs to recover. This refreshing drink provides a balance of hydration, electrolytes, and natural sugars to help keep your energy levels stable.

Ingredients

- » 2 c coconut water
- » 1 c filtered water
- » Juice of 1 lemon
- » Juice of 1 orange
- » ½ tsp sea salt (for sodium)

Instructions

1. Mix all ingredients in a bottle or shaker.
2. Stir or shake well until combined.
3. Chill and enjoy before, during, or after your workout! 🍹

SERVES
1-2

Ask a Herbalist

FROM ANCIENT HEALING TO
MODERN HERBAL PRACTICE

Yarrow

Mary Charteris, BScN, RN, RH

Yarrow has been utilised for thousands of years in ancient healing practices such as Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese Medicine. Well-established in traditional herbal practices of diverse Indigenous populations across the Americas, it is a staple herb in the Western herbal apothecary. A digestive aid and an ally to help the body manage a fever, yarrow can also be used to assist healing tissues and support the artful balance of fluids amongst body systems.^{1,2}

Yarrow's flowers, leaves, and stems act primarily on vascular tone, making it a useful herb to supplement first aid when tending to conditions of excessive bleeding or bruising. Herbalist Matthew Wood describes yarrow as 'master of the blood,'² identifying its unique action on blood flow to and from surface tissues. Yarrow is considered a diaphoretic, a herbal action which refers to influence on peripheral circulation, an ability to bring on sweat, release heat from the body and regulate fluids. This quality makes yarrow a useful support to the body in conditions when persistent fever is present.² It can lend these same regulatory mechanisms to highly vascularised organs such as the digestive tract, kidneys, and womb. From an energetics perspective, yarrow can offer balance to opposite conditions, like cooling or warming, toning or relaxing, and drying or moistening in the body, making it a versatile herb.

Rich in antioxidants, yarrow contains a robust profile of flavonoids as well as tannins, alkaloids, sterols, coumarins, volatile oils, and phenolic acids, which all contribute to its utility in addressing inflammatory conditions.¹ It's a source of vitamins A, C and thiamine, and the minerals calcium and potassium.^{1,2}

From a traditional healing standpoint, yarrow is described as protective and strengthening for energetic boundaries.³ Its sweet and bitter taste makes it palatable in teas, and best of all, it's plentiful—found easily in woods, open fields, and along roadsides, both rural and urban.

“I JUST LOVE IT. IT'S ALWAYS THERE, IN THE BACKGROUND REMINDING US, 'I'M HERE IF YOU NEED ME.'”
—Herbalist Azumi Gilbert

In my practice, I utilise yarrow in tea blends to aid in a range of digestive symptoms. As a diffusive aid added to cold and flu formulas, especially in conditions where dry fever or stubborn mucous is present. I also find it useful in

Herbal Profile

Achillea millefolium

Common Name:

Yarrow, Carpenter's Weed, Milfoil, Soldier's Woundwort, Bloodwort

Family: Asteraceae

Parts Used: aerial parts (flower, leaf, stem), and roots

Taste: sweet, pungent with a bitter finish (like anise)

Energy: bitter, pungent, aromatic

Active constituents:

- » Flavonoids (apigenin, luteolin, isorhamnetin, rutin)
- » Sesquiterpene-lactones (achillein)
- » Tannins (3–4%)
- » Alkaloids (betonidine, stachydrine, and others)
- » Phenolic acids (caffeic, salicylic)
- » Volatile oils (pinene, borneol, bornyl acetate, camphor, α-caryophyllene)
- » Coumarins¹

Herbal Actions: diaphoretic, hypotensive, astringent, anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, diuretic, antimicrobial, bitter, hepatic.^{1,2}

Internally:

Regulatory effect on fluid balance

- » Reduces fever by encouraging sweat
- » Regulatory effect on cardiovascular system via tone of blood vessels
- » Stagnant or profuse menses
- » Stimulates digestion
- » Urinary tract antiseptic (fresh herb)
- » Gentle stimulation of the hepatobiliary tract

Externally:

Apply as a salve. Fresh leaves and flowers can also be crushed and applied as a poultice. Utilised for skin irritations, hard bruises, swellings, varicosities, and to aid wound healing.²

some menstrual formulas to support balance in conditions of stagnant menses or dysmenorrhea. It is immensely soothing as a topical preparation; I opt to include both leaf and flower in salves or bath soaks for conditions of irritated or inflamed skin. In addition, yarrow prepared in a poultice is excellent for insect bites and stings. I also work with yarrow flower essence as a support for those who become emotionally overwhelmed. To me, yarrow represents one of herbal medicines’ most important principles: approaching health as a harmonious dynamic amongst systems with reverence for the relationships of our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual dimensions.

THE HISTORY OF YARROW

Native to many parts of Europe and Asia, yarrow’s use dates back at least 60,000 years. Fossils of processed yarrow pollen were found in Neanderthal burial caves in modern-day Iraq and Spain.⁴ Its botanical Latin name *Achillea millefolium*, describes the plant’s connection to the Greek warrior Achilles, who fought in the Trojan war. As the myth describes, Achilles utilised yarrow as a vulnerary on the battlefield, tending to the wounds of his soldiers. The Latin species name ‘millefolium’ refers to its leaf structure, meaning ‘thousand-leaved.’

Widely utilised by Indigenous populations in traditional healing practices worldwide, yarrow has been employed by the Algonquin and Mi’kmaq as topical relief for headache, as a cough and cold remedy, and as a tonic for chronic respiratory ailments. Also used as a febrifuge, vulnerary, gastrointestinal aid, and reproductive tonic, yarrow was referred to as ‘blood medicine’ amongst many Indigenous peoples.⁵ The Ojibway have worked with yarrow for ceremonial purposes, smoking florets of the plant or placing them over coals, and inhaling the aromatic smoke of the plant to help bring a fever to resolution.⁵ Anishinaabe people have traditionally worked with yarrow as an energetic support, pouring a mixture of sand and dried yarrow powder across doorways or around the foundation of a home, as its presence is believed to offer protection.³

PLANT DESCRIPTION

A hardy perennial, yarrow is often found growing in compact acidic soil. It has delicate, fern-like leaves divided into woolly leaflets that extend into bipinnate and occasionally tripinnate formation and grows two to six inches in length.^{8,9} Stalks are typically grooved with characteristic small woolly hairs. A mature yarrow stalk stands between one and three feet tall and by mid-June is topped by flat inflorescences

of tight, rounded clusters of small white (occasionally pink) daisy-like flowers.⁹ Yarrow is rich in nectar and faintly smells of licorice and pine—crushing the leaves or flowers between your fingers will intensify the scent.

Yarrow can resemble poison hemlock. It’s important not to forage unless you are sure of proper identification.

PROPERTIES & INDICATIONS

CIRCULATION AND BLOOD

Yarrow’s flowers, leaves, and stem contain a phenolic acid called salicylic acid (isolated and synthesised, this compound is the active ingredient in the pharmaceutical aspirin). This, combined with yarrow’s unique profile of flavonoids, coumarins, tannins, and volatile oils, is believed to contribute to its anti-inflammatory and antispasmodic action on vessel walls, targeting peripheral blood flow.¹ Yarrow can offer support in conditions of excess bleeding and is also utilised in conditions that involve stagnant, tense or congested tissue.²

INDICATIONS

- » Sudden fever may be accompanied by rash with or without chills—Supports bringing blood flow to the periphery of the body.
- » Varicosities—Fresh or dried herb can be added to the bath.
- » First aid conditions such as nosebleeds, traumatic wounds or lacerations—Ground dried leaves have traditionally been applied as a styptic.
- » Hardened bruises.

DIGESTION

Yarrow’s tannins have an astringent and toning action on the gastrointestinal mucosa. Its bitter flavour helps stimulate digestive secretions and smooth muscle contractions in the bowel, making it ideal for approaching symptoms of bloating and indigestion. The alkaloid betonicine present in yarrow leaf and the flower is being studied for its positive effects on digestion.⁶

INDICATIONS

- » Bloating, indigestion, digestive cramping, colic
- » Decreased appetite
- » Inflammatory bowel conditions

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Yarrow contains anti-inflammatory and spasmolytic flavonoids and the sesquiterpene-lactone ‘achillein,’ which is being researched for its use in menstrual pain and cramping.⁷

INDICATIONS

- » Conditions of inflammation of the reproductive organs
- » Uterine fibroids
- » Scanty menses
- » Menstrual cramping

CONTRAINDICATIONS & SAFETY

Those with sensitivity to the *Astraceae* family should avoid the therapeutic use of this plant. Not to be consumed during pregnancy.

PREPARATIONS & APPLICATIONS

Dosage:

2–4 g dried herb daily. 3–5 ml pressed juice from fresh herb up to three times daily.

Tincture:

2–4 ml three times daily (1:5 in 25%)

Tea (infusion):

Pour 1 cup of low-boiled water over 1–2 teaspoons of dried herb; steep infusion, covered for 10–15 minutes. Drink hot up to three times per day. During a fever, infusion can be drunk hourly. *Please consult your practitioner or trusted reference for dosages intended for children.*

Dried:

Gather stems of yarrow early in bloom, wrap them in garden twine, and hang upside down in a cool place away from direct light.

Fresh Tincture:

Harvest leaves and flowers and fill a sterilised jar two-thirds full with plant material. Add menstruum spirit, such as vodka, to cover one inch above the plant material, making sure it is submerged. Cover with wax paper and seal with lid. Store the preparation in a cool place out of direct sunlight, and gently shake or stir the contents of the jar daily for a minimum of four weeks. Ensure all plant parts remain submerged in the menstruum. Strain through cheesecloth and press out remaining herbal material. Enjoy your homemade fresh tincture preparation for up to two years. 🍷

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Different ACUPUNCTURE Practices

and How to Choose What's Best for You

Mary Baskwell, R.TCMP, R.Ac, RPN

Acupuncture is often pictured as fine needles placed along the body's meridians to relieve pain or promote healing, but it's far from one-size-fits-all. There are many distinct styles, each with its own philosophy and approach. In many ways, acupuncture feels as much like an art as it does a science. Every acupuncturist brings a unique perspective, and no two treatments are exactly alike. Diagnosis and treatment plans are highly individualised, evolving as the practitioner follows the patient's changing needs. Since we are always in flux, true care flows with us, adjusting to support balance and well-being in the moment.

Some acupuncture methods emphasise immediate pain relief, while others focus on harmonising emotions or addressing

deeper imbalances. Whether it's Traditional Chinese Medicine, Dr. Tan's Balance Method, Tung's acupuncture, Five Element acupuncture, Esoteric acupuncture, Kiiko Matsumoto style, or Scalp acupuncture, each technique offers something unique. Many practitioners blend multiple approaches to create personalised treatments, while others dedicate themselves to mastering one particular style.

Let's explore different acupuncture styles, what makes each special, and the scope of practice for various healthcare professionals who offer acupuncture. If you've ever wondered why treatments vary or how different traditions shape your healing experience, read on!

THE DIFFERENT PRACTICES

What sets Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) acupuncture apart is its diagnostic process. TCM doesn't just relieve symptoms, it identifies the root cause of imbalance and addresses what needs to be nourished, strengthened, or harmonised, explaining why treatments evolve with your needs. Registered acupuncturists study classical TCM and then may choose to learn additional styles.

Many healthcare providers including physiotherapists, chiropractors, massage therapists, manual osteopaths, and naturopathic doctors offer acupuncture as part of their practice. However, their acupuncture training is typically limited to their primary scope of practice and does not include the full diagnostic framework of TCM. Most non-TCM practitioners complete around 200-300 hours of acupuncture training, including theory and limited direct patient experience (clinical practice) with acupuncture.

In contrast, a TCM acupuncturist or practitioner undergoes two to four years of training, covering classical theory, TCM foundations and diagnosis, anatomy, internal medicine, biomedicine, ethics, and techniques, food therapy, other TCM modalities (cupping, Moxibustion, TCM dietary therapy, qi gong, tai chi) along with extensive hands-on clinical practice. Registered TCM Practitioners (RTCMP) have additional education and can prescribe TCM herbal formulas. This in-depth education allows for a more comprehensive application of acupuncture, rooted in a cultural and historical framework that has made it a reliable and relevant form of medicine for more than 2,000 years.

All acupuncture has value, and each approach is unique. Some practitioners from other healthcare fields who offer acupuncture adjunct to their practice have a particular interest in acupuncture and pursue additional postgraduate education to deepen their expertise. In Ontario, unless a practitioner is registered with the College of Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioners and Acupuncturists of Ontario (CTCMPAO), they cannot legally use the title "acupuncturist." They may still offer acupuncture as a complementary practice within their licensed profession but must follow their regulatory body's scope of practice.

Chiropractors integrate acupuncture primarily for muscle relaxation and pain relief, without providing a TCM diagnosis. Their focus is structural, incorporating adjustments, soft tissue therapy, and rehab exercises, often emphasising neuro-

muscular function over meridian theory. Acupuncture is an optional certification for this practice.

Naturopathic doctors (NDs) trained in acupuncture cover more TCM theory than physiotherapists, chiropractors, or massage therapists but less than licensed acupuncturists. Acupuncture is taught as a modality in their college program. NDs integrate acupuncture with herbal medicine, nutrition, and lifestyle recommendations, often emphasising a biomedical approach rather than using deep classical TCM theory.

Registered massage therapists (RMTs) with an acupuncture certificate use it for pain relief, muscle tension, and injury recovery. Their focus is musculoskeletal, and they do not provide a TCM diagnosis or treatment plan. Depending on training, they may incorporate acupuncture alongside massage therapy but are generally not trained in broader internal medicine applications.

Manual osteopaths who are practising acupuncture choose to become a fully registered acupuncturist (RAC or RTCMP depending on their chosen designation). They must complete a full TCM acupuncture program, successfully complete board exams, and register with CTCMPAO. Acupuncture is not included in manual osteopathy training but can be integrated into their practice if the practitioner wants to pursue it.

Physiotherapists using acupuncture focus on musculoskeletal pain, headaches, arthritis, and sports injuries. Their approach is based on Western medical principles, selecting points anatomically rather than considering internal conditions or systemic imbalances. Acupuncture is an optional certification.

Registered TCM acupuncturists (RAC) and Registered TCM practitioners (RTCMP) provide comprehensive treatments rooted in classical Chinese medicine. Their training allows them to address a broad range of conditions, including gynaecology, digestion, autoimmune issues, neurological concerns, emotional health, pain, and more. They also offer TCM dietary, herbal, and lifestyle guidance, teaching self-care practices like food therapy, acupressure, moxibustion, and meditation. RAC and RTCMP are protected titles regulated by CTCMPAO.

Acupuncture is a lifelong study, and many practitioners refine and expand their approach over the years. Some dedicate themselves to a single style, while others integrate multiple techniques based on patient needs and clinical experience.

Here are some of the most well-known styles of acupuncture, listed alphabetically (since no one method is “best”). This is not an exhaustive list!

- » **Balance Method** (Dr. Tan’s Acupuncture): A highly effective system for pain relief and internal conditions using distal points.
- » **Esoteric Acupuncture**: This is more of a complementary and spiritually focused approach that integrates concepts from The Tree of Life, Kabbalah, sacred geometry, and chakras to support spiritual alignment, often including meditation and dietary therapy.
- » **Five Element Acupuncture**: Focuses on emotional and spiritual well-being, aligning treatments with seasonal and elemental influences.
- » **Kiiko Matsumoto Style**: A Japanese acupuncture approach using palpation for instant feedback and gentle needling techniques. Valuable for all, but some people who prefer a gentler treatment may appreciate this style.
- » **Scalp Acupuncture**: A neurological acupuncture method used for stroke recovery, brain injuries, and nerve-related conditions.
- » **SAAM Acupuncture**: A Korean style balancing the five elements (earth, metal, fire, water, wood) and focuses on complex channel theory and pulse diagnosis. Effective for chronic conditions and emotional health.
- » **Tung’s Acupuncture**: A lineage-based system known for its powerful and minimal-needle approach, using fewer needles and often with immediate results. Useful for pain and internal conditions as well.

Each of these styles offers something valuable, and acupuncture can vary greatly depending on the practitioner’s approach. While other acupuncture styles exist, these are common and help broaden the understanding of acupuncture for those who may have thought it was “all the same.” The variety of application is a part of what makes acupuncture exciting for practitioners, it’s both a craft and a way to offer healing for the betterment of society.

CHOOSING AN ACUPUNCTURIST

It’s easy to get caught up in searching for the “best” practitioner, but the real question is: Who is the right practitioner

for you? With so many options, how do you find the best fit for your needs?

Choosing the right acupuncturist starts with understanding what matters most to you. Are you seeking acupuncture for something specific? Do you prefer a practitioner who focuses solely on acupuncture, or one who integrates therapies like herbal medicine, bodywork, dietary guidance, or other modalities? Some practitioners emphasise holistic care, addressing the root cause, and emotional and energetic aspects of health, while others focus more on symptom relief.

Consider their training. Are they fully trained in TCM acupuncture, or is acupuncture an adjunct to another profession? Experience also plays a role—some people feel most comfortable with a seasoned practitioner, while others are open to a newer graduate with fresh insights and enthusiasm. Practical factors matter too; Is the clinic conveniently located? Do their hours fit your schedule? Compatibility is important too. Do you feel at ease with their approach and communication style?

Ultimately, acupuncture is a deeply personal experience, and the right practitioner is someone whose expertise and philosophy align with your needs. Taking time to reflect on these questions will help you make an informed choice.

Every acupuncturist brings their own energy, style, and expertise to the table. Explore your options, and trust that the right practitioner for you is out there. 🌿



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Postpartum Hair Loss

WHY IT HAPPENS & HOW TO MANAGE IT

Dr. Ailya Patel, ND



effo

For many new mothers, the postpartum period is filled with both joy and unexpected challenges. One of the most distressing experiences can be postpartum hair loss, also known as *telogen effluvium*. This temporary condition, which results in noticeable shedding of hair, often takes women by surprise and raises concerns about long-term hair health. Understanding the causes, timelines, and learning effective management strategies can help new mothers navigate this phase with confidence.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND POSTPARTUM HAIR LOSS

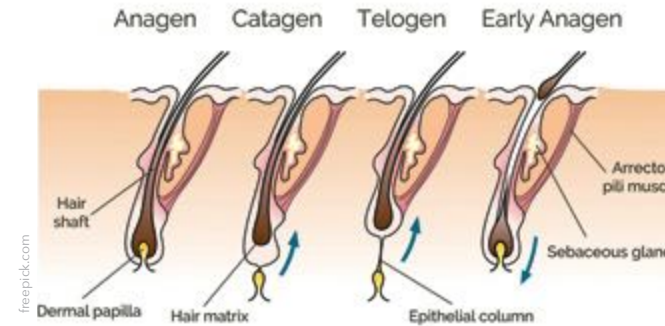
Hair growth follows a cycle consisting of three primary phases: the anagen (growth) phase, the catagen (transitional) phase, and the telogen (resting) phase. Under normal conditions, about 85–90 percent of hair follicles remain in the anagen phase, while a smaller percentage is in the telogen phase before naturally shedding.¹

During pregnancy, elevated estrogen levels prolong the anagen phase, resulting in thicker, fuller hair. After childbirth, estrogen levels drop sharply, causing a significant number of hairs to enter the telogen phase simultaneously. This sudden shift leads to increased shedding that typically begins around three months postpartum and peaks between four to six months.²

Breastfeeding can exacerbate hair shedding due to continued hormonal fluctuations and increased nutritional demands. Prolactin, the hormone responsible for milk production, may contribute to prolonged low estrogen levels, delaying the return of the normal hair growth cycle.

For some individuals, postpartum telogen effluvium may not only cause temporary shedding but can also unmask underlying androgenic alopecia (female pattern hair loss). In these cases, hair may not fully recover to its pre-pregnancy density, and ongoing thinning may persist beyond the typical recovery period. Identifying whether hair loss is solely due to telogen effluvium or if there is an underlying androgenic component is essential for appropriate management.

HAIR GROWTH CYCLE



Postpartum hair loss does not happen immediately after childbirth. The typical timeline is as follows:

- » **First 6 weeks:** Most women notice no significant changes.
- » **2–3 months:** Increased shedding begins as hair follicles enter the telogen phase.
- » **4–6 months:** Shedding peaks, and some women may experience noticeable thinning around the temples or crown.
- » **6–12 months:** Hair shedding gradually slows down, and regrowth begins.

By the baby's first birthday, most mothers find their hair returning to its normal thickness, though some may notice minor textural or density changes.³

While postpartum hair loss is a natural and temporary process, it can be upsetting. Most women experience regrowth within six to 12 months without any intervention. However, adopting the right nutrition, hair care, and stress management strategies can help support hair health during this phase.

NUTRITION

Adequate nutrition is essential for healthy hair regrowth. Key nutrients include:

Iron

Low iron levels (<30 ng/mL) are linked to excessive shedding, particularly in postpartum mothers who experienced heavy bleeding during delivery. Ensuring adequate intake and pairing with vitamin C can improve absorption.⁴ Good sources of vitamin C are oranges, strawberries, and bell peppers.

- » **Heme iron (best absorbed):** lean beef, lamb, chicken liver, turkey, salmon, tuna

- » **Non-heme iron (plant-based):** spinach, lentils, chickpeas, quinoa, tofu, pumpkin seeds

Biotin

While biotin is often recommended for hair and nail health, research on its effectiveness for postpartum hair loss is limited. However, it does play a role in keratin production and hair strength.⁵

- » **Sources:** egg yolks, almonds, walnuts, sunflower seeds, sweet potatoes, avocados, mushrooms, salmon, sardines

Protein

Hair is primarily composed of keratin, making protein intake crucial for regrowth. Postpartum mothers should aim for 1.2–1.5 g of protein per kg of body weight daily.⁶

- » **Animal-based:** chicken, turkey, beef, eggs, Greek yoghurt, cottage cheese, bone broth
- » **Plant-based:** lentils, chickpeas, black beans, quinoa, hemp seeds, chia seeds

Zinc

Zinc is essential for hair follicle function, and a deficiency can contribute to hair loss. Studies suggest 15–30 mg daily supports regrowth.⁷

- » **Sources:** oysters, beef, lamb, crab, turkey, pumpkin seeds, cashews, chickpeas, lentils, cheese, yoghurt

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

These healthy fats can help reduce scalp inflammation and improve hair strength.⁸

- » **Fatty fish:** salmon, mackerel, sardines
- » **Plant-based:** flaxseeds, chia seeds, walnuts

Collagen Peptides

Collagen provides essential amino acids that may improve hair thickness and strengthen follicles.⁹

- » **Sources:** bone broth (chicken, beef, fish), gelatin (homemade fruit gummies, grass-fed gelatin powder), collagen supplements (hydrolyzed collagen peptides in smoothies or coffee)

GENTLE HAIR-CARE PRACTICES

To reduce breakage and protect fragile hair:

- » Use a wide-tooth comb and avoid excessive brushing.
- » Minimise the use of heat styling tools.
- » Choose a sulphate-free, mild shampoo to retain natural oils.¹⁰

HORMONAL CONSIDERATIONS

While postpartum shedding is primarily caused by estrogen fluctuations, and androgenic alopecia, thyroid dysfunction can also contribute. Postpartum thyroiditis is the inflammation of the thyroid gland, which can cause prolonged hair thinning. If hair loss persists beyond a year or is accompanied by fatigue, mood changes, or weight fluctuations, it’s important to consult a healthcare provider for further evaluation.¹¹

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Chronic stress increases cortisol levels, which can disrupt hair growth cycles.¹² New mothers should prioritise self-care by:

- » Getting adequate sleep whenever possible.
- » Practicing mindfulness techniques like meditation or deep breathing.
- » Joining postpartum support groups for emotional well-being.

TOPICAL TREATMENTS

Rosemary Essential Oil: Clinical studies suggest that rosemary oil is as effective as 2 percent minoxidil in promoting hair growth.¹³ Massaging diluted rosemary oil into the scalp a few times per week can help stimulate follicles and improve circulation.

Amla (*Phyllanthus emblica*): Amla (Indian gooseberry) has been traditionally used for hair growth and scalp health. A recent study found that amla powder extract activates hair growth genes and may stimulate follicles.¹⁴ Applying amla oil or an amla-infused hair mask can nourish the scalp and strengthen hair.

Scalp Massage: Regular scalp massage increases blood flow to hair follicles, enhancing nutrient delivery and promoting healthy regrowth.¹⁵ It can be done with or without an oil and is a simple, effective practice for hair health.

ACUPUNCTURE

Acupuncture may support postpartum recovery by enhancing circulation to the scalp, balancing hormones, and reducing stress-related hair loss. Research suggests it can be a useful complementary therapy for managing hair thinning in new mothers.¹⁶

LOW-LEVEL LIGHT THERAPY (LLLT)

Low-Level Light Therapy is a non-invasive treatment that uses red or near-infrared light to increase blood flow to the hair

follicles, delivering essential oxygen and growth factors that support regrowth. It also helps improve the metabolic activity of hair follicle cells, encouraging them to remain in the anagen (growth) phase for longer.¹⁷ While LLLT can be a significant investment, with devices ranging from \$300 to \$3000, it offers a drug-free, safe option for breastfeeding mothers experiencing postpartum shedding. Regular use over several months may help restore hair density and thickness, making it a beneficial long-term solution for those seeking to optimise regrowth.

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

There are several prescription medications available for hair loss that work by blocking hormonal triggers, stimulating hair follicles, or extending the growth phase of the hair cycle. However, these medications are not considered safe during breastfeeding, as they can be absorbed into the bloodstream and potentially pass into breast milk. If postpartum hair loss persists beyond a year or shows signs of androgenic alopecia, a healthcare provider may prescribe these treatments once breastfeeding has ended. Consulting a medical professional is essential to determine if these options are appropriate based on individual health history and hormonal status.

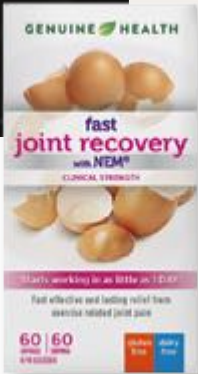
Hair plays a significant role in self-image, and postpartum shedding can impact a mother’s confidence. It’s important to acknowledge these feelings while also recognising that this is a temporary phase. Many women find comfort in experimenting with different hairstyles, such as layered cuts or side-swept bangs, to create the illusion of volume. Women might also find comfort in wearing headbands or scarves during peak shedding phases, and by connecting with other mothers who have experienced similar changes, normalising the postpartum hair journey.

Postpartum hair loss is a normal yet sometimes overwhelming experience for new mothers. The good news is that this phase is temporary, and most women see their hair return to its usual fullness within a year. Prioritising a nutrient-rich diet, gentle hair care, and stress management can make this transition smoother. If shedding continues beyond a year, it may be worth checking in with a healthcare provider to rule out any underlying issues. Embracing the physical changes that come with motherhood can help women feel more confident and reassured during this natural process. 🌱

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WHAT ARE FIBROIDS?

What Every Woman Should Know

Shelby Sly, Jensen Pletch & Dr. Alisa Murli, ND

“NATURAL APPROACHES AIM TO ADDRESS THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF FIBROIDS.”

Fibroids, also known as uterine fibroids or leiomyomas, are non-cancerous growths that develop in the smooth muscle of the uterus. They are common and affect many women, especially those in their childbearing years (25 to 50 years of age). These growths can vary in size, from tiny ones that are hard to detect to large ones that can change the shape of the uterus.¹ While many women with fibroids don't have symptoms, others can experience problems, including pain or other health issues that affect their everyday lives.

HOW DID I GET FIBROIDS?

There are several factors that may increase the risk of developing fibroids, including age, family history or ethnicity, early menarche (starting your period young), and vitamin D deficiency. For example, women of African descent are more likely to develop fibroids earlier and with more severe symptoms.^{1,2}

Fibroids grow in response to estrogen and progesterone, the hormones that regulate a woman's menstrual cycle. These hormones stimulate the growth of the uterine lining during each cycle and can similarly stimulate fibroid growth. When a woman reaches menopause, hormone levels decrease, which may cause fibroids to shrink; however, certain hormonal treatments that contain estrogen, like birth control pills or hormone replacement therapy, may cause fibroids to grow once again.^{1,3}

SYMPTOMS & IMPACT ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

As mentioned, not all women with fibroids have symptoms, but when they do, they can be mild to severe. Some common symptoms may include:

- » **Heavy periods:** This can lead to anemia (a lack of red blood cells), which causes tiredness and weakness.
- » **Pelvic pain or pressure:** Fibroids can cause a feeling of fullness or pain in the lower abdomen.
- » **Frequent urination:** If fibroids press against the bladder, they can cause the need to urinate more often.
- » **Pain during sex:** Some fibroids may cause discomfort during intercourse.
- » **Pregnancy issues:** Fibroids can, in some cases, interfere with pregnancy by affecting implantation, increasing the risk of miscarriage, or contributing to complications like preterm birth, malpositioning (breech), or Cesarean delivery.^{1,3,4}

For many women, these symptoms can seriously impact their daily life, including physical activity, emotional health, and the ability to get pregnant. While fibroids don't always cause fertility problems, they can sometimes block fallopian tubes or prevent a fertilised egg from attaching to the uterus. The impact on fertility varies depending on the size, location, and number of fibroids.

DIAGNOSTICS & TREATMENT

To diagnose fibroids, a doctor may perform a physical exam, ultrasound, or MRI. In some cases, procedures such as *hysteroscopy* (used to view the inside of the uterus) or *laparoscopy* (to examine the outside of the uterus and surrounding organs) may be used. Although fibroids are not life-threatening, it's important to manage them to reduce symptoms and prevent future problems.¹

Conventional Treatment Options

- » **Medications:** Doctors may prescribe hormonal treatments, such as birth control or IUDs, to control heavy bleeding. Sometimes, drugs known as GnRH agonists are used to shrink fibroids temporarily, and may induce a menopause-like state or suppress sex hormones.
- » **Surgery:** If symptoms are severe, surgery might be needed. One option is a myomectomy, where fibroids are removed while keeping the uterus intact. In extreme cases, a hysterectomy (removal of the uterus) may be necessary.
- » **Uterine artery embolisation (UAE):** This minimally invasive procedure blocks the blood vessels that supply the fibroids, causing them to shrink. While effective, UAE may not be suitable for women who are hoping to become pregnant, as it can affect blood flow to the uterus as well.^{1,3}

Although these treatments can help, they may come with side effects or risks. Some women choose natural or alternative treatments to help manage fibroids alongside medical ones.

Natural Approaches

These options aim to address the underlying causes of fibroids and support symptom management. It's important to note that these options are not a replacement for medical treatment, as their effectiveness may vary. These options may help to provide some relief from symptoms.

Acupuncture: A key component of Traditional Chinese Medicine, has been shown to help regulate blood flow to the uterus, reduce pain, and balance hormonal levels. Some studies suggest that acupuncture may reduce fibroid-related symptoms, such as heavy bleeding and pelvic pain, and improve fertility outcomes.⁵

Botanical herbs: Certain herbs have traditionally been used to support uterine health and reduce fibroid symptoms. There is some evidence supporting the use of Vitex (chasteberry) and green tea (EGCG) for managing uterine fibroid symptoms, although the research is still limited.^{6,7}

Stress management: Chronic stress can exacerbate hormonal imbalances, potentially contributing to the growth of fibroids. Techniques such as yoga, mindfulness meditation, and deep-breathing exercises can help reduce stress levels and support overall well-being.⁸

Exercise: Regular physical activity can help maintain a healthy weight, which could help manage symptoms and support wellness.⁸

Anti-inflammatory diet: Diets low in processed foods and high in fruits and vegetables may help reduce systemic inflammation and support hormone balance.⁹

When to See a Healthcare Provider

If you're experiencing symptoms like heavy bleeding, pelvic pain, or difficulty getting pregnant, it's important to see a healthcare provider. Early diagnosis and treatment can help prevent complications. Additionally, fibroids can change over time, and although treatment may not be needed initially, ongoing monitoring can be helpful. Your provider can help determine whether fibroids are the cause of your symptoms and discuss the best treatment options for your situation.

Conventional treatments like medications and surgery can help, but may come with risks and side effects. For those seeking natural options, lifestyle changes, acupuncture, herbs, and stress management techniques may offer some relief. If you have fibroids, it's best to work with your healthcare provider to find a treatment plan that works for you. 🌱

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Non-Toxic Skincare & Natural Hair Removal

Small Changes That Add Up to Big Differences

Ali Huson, ND Candidate

In an era where we scrutinise food labels and seek organic produce, shouldn't we also pay close attention to what we put on our skin? Our skin is our largest organ, and what we put on it matters.

As a naturopathic doctor graduate, I hear from many people struggling with skin sensitivities, hormonal concerns, and reactions to conventional skincare products. The good news is that there are plenty of effective, non-toxic skincare and natural hair removal methods that support skin health while minimising risks.

WHY GO NON-TOXIC?

Many conventional skincare and hair removal products contain ingredients that can be irritating or even harmful in the long term. Chemicals like parabens, phthalates, synthetic fragrances, and formaldehyde-releasing preservatives have been linked to endocrine disruption, allergic reactions, and potential long-term health concerns. A 2021 study published in *Environmental Health Perspectives* highlighted that repeated exposure to certain cosmetic preservatives can impact hormone levels, particularly in women.¹ By choosing non-toxic options, we reduce our body's overall toxic burden, support hormones, skin resilience, and overall well-being.

Keeping your skincare routine simple and natural is the best way to avoid unnecessary exposure to irritants. Here are a few essential swaps:

CLEANSING—Oil & Gentle Herbal Washes

Ditch the foaming face washes that often strip the skin's natural oils. Instead, try:

- » **Oil cleansing method:** Using organic oils like jojoba, sweet almond, or hemp seed can cleanse the skin without disrupting its natural moisture barrier.
- » **Herbal washes:** Infusions of chamomile, calendula, or green tea can be used as gentle face rinses for soothing and anti-inflammatory benefits.

MOISTURISING—Pure Oils & Aloe Vera

Instead of synthetic-laden moisturisers, opt for:

- » **Pure plant oils:** Rosehip, argan, or squalane oils deeply hydrate and nourish the skin.
- » **Aloe vera gel:** Soothes irritation and provides lightweight hydration, especially for acne-prone or sensitive skin.

EXFOLIATION—Natural Scrubs & Enzymes

Avoid plastic microbeads and harsh chemical exfoliants. Instead, consider:

- » **Oatmeal & honey scrub:** Gently buffs the skin while soothing inflammation.
- » **Fruit enzymes (papaya & pineapple extracts):** Provide gentle exfoliation without physical abrasion.

SUN PROTECTION—Mineral Sunscreens

Chemical sunscreens often contain oxybenzone, an ingredient that has been shown to disrupt hormones. Try:

- » **Zinc oxide-based sunscreens:** These provide broad-spectrum protection without harmful chemicals.

NATURAL HAIR REMOVAL METHODS

Whether it's for convenience or personal preference, hair removal is a common part of self-care; however, many conventional methods involve synthetic waxes, harsh chemicals, and irritants. Here are some healthier alternatives:

SUGARING—An Ancient, Skin-Friendly Option

Sugaring is a natural hair removal method that dates back to ancient Egypt.² It uses a simple mixture of sugar, lemon, and water to remove hair while exfoliating the skin. It's gentle on skin without the use of harsh chemicals.

THREADING—The Minimalist Approach

Threading is a hair removal technique that uses a twisted cotton or polyester thread to pull hair out at the follicle level. It's gentle on skin without the use of harsh chemicals.

WAXING—Natural DIY

Traditional waxes often contain synthetic resins and artificial fragrances. Instead, try a homemade beeswax and honey wax. It's a gentler, skin-nourishing option.

NATURAL—Depilatory Cream Alternatives

Most depilatory creams contain strong chemicals like thioglycolic acid, which can irritate the skin. Consider using turmeric and milk paste. It's traditionally used in Ayurvedic skincare and this mixture can slow hair growth over time. You can also try a papaya enzyme mask. Papain—an enzyme in papaya—can weaken hair follicles with consistent use.

SUPPORTING SKIN & HAIR HEALTH FROM THE INSIDE

Healthy skin isn't just about what we apply to the surface—it starts from within.

Eat a Nutrient-Dense Diet

Focus on healthy fats like avocados, nuts, and seeds, as well as antioxidants (berries, leafy greens), and collagen-boosting foods such as bone broth, and vitamin C-rich fruits.

Stay Hydrated

Dehydration can make hair removal more irritating to the skin.

Support Your Hormones

Excessive hair growth (hirsutism) can be linked to hormonal conditions such as PCOS. If you are struggling with skin concerns it may be beneficial to be assessed by a healthcare provider to determine if your symptoms are the manifestation of another condition.

Switching to non-toxic skincare and natural hair removal methods is a simple but impactful way to reduce exposure to harmful chemicals while taking great care of your skin. Whether you opt for oil cleansing, sugaring, or herbal moisturisers, small changes can add up to big differences in the health of your skin and body.

If you're looking for personalised advice on holistic skincare, I encourage you to consult with a naturopathic doctor. Your skin is a reflection of your overall health, so let's treat it with the care it deserves. 🌿

For references visit ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM25

PERFUME OILS, MISTS & SPRAYS

YOU CAN SMELL WONDERFUL
WITHOUT THE HARMFUL CHEMICALS

Smelling nice no longer needs to be accompanied by harmful chemicals. Choosing a natural perfume for any occasion is easy when you know what to look for. Try these beautiful scents in the morning, afternoon, or at night!

Tip:

Perfumes should be applied to your pulse points, like your wrist or neck, but you can also spray a cloud into the air and walk through it. Remember, less is more!

MAROMA –Vanilla Passion (Perfume Oil)

This layered perfume is made with clove and cinnamon leaf oil and coumarin, which is topped with sweet fruity scents, with a middle layer of creamy spice, and a base of vanilla beans. Just place it on your wrist or neck and let the aroma work its magic all day or night. Made without harmful phthalates, propylene glycol, or parabens.



ZORAH BIOCOSMETICS –Enchanting Roller Perfume

Awaken your olfactory senses with this 100% natural, exotic, and elegant perfume. Its notes of pear, apricot, and manuka honey will captivate you. It's CertClean and a recipient of the 2025 Clean Beauty Awards. GMO-free, vegan, cruelty-free, and certified organic and fair trade.



JIMMY BOYD –Eau De Cologne (Wild Roses)

Wild Roses is a light and subtle unisex Eau de Cologne made from natural ingredients, including lemon, rose, lily of the valley, and vanilla. A rose petal is in every bottle, enhancing the fragrance of the cologne from the petal's natural extracts. It can be used directly on your skin or as a room scent.



PACIFICA –Perfume Spray (Dream Moon)

Did you ever think you could feel love and gratitude from a bottle? Dream Moon hair and body spray brings together scents of sandalwood, patchouli, and pink rose to do just that. Formulated without parabens, propylene glycol, or phthalates, this beautifully harmonised perfume is an expression of natural grain alcohol, essential oils, and all-natural ingredients.



SKYBOTTLE –Perfumed Hair and Body Mist (White Rain)

White Rain: A term Skybottle uses to describe the feeling you get when you wear this remarkable fragrance. It's like walking through a spring, dew-filled, flower garden with scents of white rose, lilac, bergamot-tuberose, honeysuckle, and cedarwood. This multi-purpose perfume/body mist moisturises and conditions your skin with snow lotus and cottonseed extract. Soybean extract also provides a calming effect.



HERBAN COWBOY –Cologne (Dusk)

Herban Cowboy Dusk is an organic cologne that is free of harmful dyes and synthetics: phthalates, parabens, sulphates or triclosan. It's vegan and cruelty-free, is biodegradable and comes in a recyclable package. PETA certified. 🌱

DRINKS THAT MAY HELP WITH

Sleep

NATURAL REMEDIES TO HELP YOU CATCH SOME ZS

Angela Moscarelli, RHN



sonyakamoz / Depositphotos.com

Insufficient sleep is a common problem in our fast-paced modern society; in fact it's considered a major global public health issue across various age groups.¹ Quality sleep is critical to our overall physical and mental well-being. Sleep supports our immunity, energy levels, physical performance and even reduces inflammation. Lack of sleep can be attributed to an overall decreased quality of life, reduced ability to deal with stress, frequent mood swings, and reduced cognitive memory and performance. Major sleep disorders include insomnia, restless leg syndrome, sleep apnea and narcolepsy. Thankfully, there are ways to help obtain a restful sleep naturally, through diet and lifestyle. Sleep-inducing drinks may help improve the quality of sleep like herbal teas (which offer calming properties), warm milk, and tart cherry juice which contain sleep-promoting compounds. Foods like bananas and almonds also hit the mark and are easily blended into a delicious smoothie.

Here are five drinks you can try to improve the quality of your sleep. Which one will you try first?

Chamomile Tea

Chamomile flowers have white petals and a yellow centre similar to daisies. This herb is a traditional remedy for anxiety, tension, and insomnia. The heads of chamomile flowers are used medicinally for a variety of actions including wound healing, calming a nervous stomach, symptoms of inflammation, digestive aid, and insomnia. Chamomile contains apigenin which binds to receptors in the brain that may promote sleep and can also create an overall calming effect. Chamomile is considered a non-habit-forming sedative which can be used for both occasional and long-term use. Enjoy this herbal tea before bed or consume it throughout the day to calm the effects of stress and worry which may be keeping you up at night.

Valerian Tea

The roots and underground stems of the valerian plant are used medicinally to treat insomnia, anxiety, headaches, meno-

pause symptoms, and depression. A 2020 review was conducted, which consisted of 60 studies, that concluded valerian root could be a safe and effective herb in treating sleep problems, anxiety, and preventing associated disorders.² It's often the dominant ingredient in most store-bought herbal "sleep tea" blends, although you can make your own at home using dried valerian root. Simply add three grams of dried valerian root to one cup of hot water and allow to steep for 10-15 minutes before straining. Enjoy a cup before bed.

Warm Milk

Growing up you might remember your mom serving you a mug of warm milk before bed. A comforting bedtime ritual promoting relaxation, yes, but also the science suggests the compounds in milk, including tryptophan and melatonin, may help to promote a good night's sleep. Tryptophan is an essential amino acid and precursor for producing the neurotransmitter serotonin, which boosts mood and promotes relaxation. Serotonin is also the precursor to melatonin—known as the sleep hormone—and helps regulate your circadian rhythm and prepare your body for entering a sleep cycle. A mug of warm milk may be a simple solution to a good night's sleep. Bring a cup of milk to a low simmer on the stove for a few minutes until warmed through. Add a pinch of cinnamon if desired.

Banana Almond Smoothie

A blended smoothie made with bananas and almond butter can serve as a healthy sleep-inducing drink on those nights when you might be feeling a bit hungry too. Bananas and almonds contain sleep-promoting compounds including melatonin, tryptophan, and magnesium. The mineral magnesium is known to help sleep quality by reducing cortisol (the stress hormone), which may interrupt sleep. This duo is rich in vitamins and minerals and is loaded with fibre. In addition, almonds contain healthy fats which are satiating, and bananas are rich in soluble fibre which helps to slow down digestion leaving you feeling fuller longer. Blend one ripe banana, 3/4 cup of milk, two tablespoons of almond butter, and 1/2 cup of crushed ice. Enjoy this smoothie two to three hours before bed to give your body a chance to digest.

Tart Cherry Juice

The juice of sour cherries (tart cherry juice) can help fight inflammation, reduce muscle soreness, support your im-

mune system, and help to promote better and longer sleep.³ Tart cherries contain a high content of melatonin as well as tryptophan and anthocyanins, both of which help the body produce more melatonin and lengthen its effects. Tart cherries are rich in certain compounds that may reduce inflammation, which can contribute to improved sleep by alleviating discomfort and promoting relaxation. Choose unsweetened tart cherry juice concentrate. Take a few tablespoons before bed or dilute with water if you find the taste to be too sour.

SLEEP SUPPORT CHECKLIST:

- ✓ Avoid caffeine after lunchtime. Coffee, tea, energy drinks, and chocolate contain caffeine which is a stimulant and can suppress melatonin.
- ✓ Get outside in the morning. Sunlight exposure in the morning helps to regulate your circadian rhythm.
- ✓ Stay off all screens at least one hour before bedtime. Blue light in the evening can suppress the production of melatonin by tricking your brain into thinking it's daytime.
- ✓ Keep your bedroom dark, quiet, cool, and preferably device-free.
- ✓ Have a relaxing wind-down routine that you follow every night to help prepare your body and mind for sleep. Meditate, read, enjoy a sleep-promoting drink, or soak in a warm bath with Epsom salts containing magnesium sulphate that can help relax muscles and support sleep.
- ✓ Avoid alcohol before bed which can impact the quality of your sleep.
- ✓ Maintain a consistent bedtime, early enough to get 7-9 hours of sleep. Following the same schedule every night can help signal the body it's time for sleep.

Prioritising sleep is one of the best things you can do to improve your health and overall quality of life—sadly, most of us are not getting the recommended amount of sleep we need each night. Luckily, these sleep-promoting drinks take only minutes to prepare and can help promote a restful sleep naturally. Give one a try and see for yourself. Cheers to a good night's sleep!

Recipe

SERVES
1

MOON MILK

Enjoy this sleep-promoting beverage loaded with beneficial ingredients to help you relax and get a good night's sleep. Adaptogens like ashwagandha root and reishi mushroom have been shown to help your body "adapt" to everyday stressors by helping to balance hormones, boost the immune system, and improve sleep.

INGREDIENTS

- » 1 c almond milk, unsweetened
- » 2 Tbsp tart cherry juice, concentrated unsweetened
- » 1 tsp pure raw honey
- » ¼ tsp ashwagandha root powder
- » ¼ tsp reishi mushroom powder

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add milk and tart cherry juice to a small saucepan and simmer over medium heat.
2. Remove from heat and whisk in honey, ashwagandha and reishi.
3. Pour into a mug, sip and enjoy. 🍷

For references visit ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM25

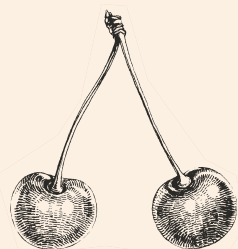
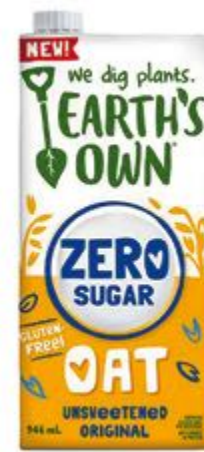


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THE HEALTHY KITCHEN

SUMMER FAMILY FAVOURITES

Angela Moscarelli, RHN

SERVES
2

High-Protein Yoghurt Parfait WITH BERRY CHIA JAM

The perfect recipe when you are short on time but want a nourishing breakfast or protein-packed snack. This recipe can also double as a healthy dessert.

INGREDIENTS

- » 1 c mixed berries, fresh or frozen
- » 1 Tbsp chia seeds
- » 2 c natural plain yoghurt
- » 2 scoops collagen powder
- » 2 Tbsp pure honey
- » 4 Tbsp granola
- » 2 tsp hemp seeds

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Add the berries to a shallow bowl and mash with a fork.
- 2 Stir the chia seeds into the mashed berries to create a chia jam and set aside.
- 3 Add the yoghurt, collagen, and honey to a small bowl and mix to combine.
- 4 Layer the ingredients into two glasses to create your yoghurt parfait. Begin by adding ½ cup of yoghurt mixture to the bottom of each glass, then add ¼ cup of the berry chia jam. Repeat the layers using the remaining yoghurt mixture and chia jam.
- 5 Top each parfait with 2 Tbsp granola and 1 tsp hemp seeds.

Strawberry Salmon Salad WITH CREAMY STRAWBERRY BALSAMIC DRESSING

Strawberry season is here! Start adding them to everything sweet and savoury. The chopped strawberries in this salmon salad deliver bold hits of sweet and tangy; they turn the creamy balsamic dressing into something magical. This salad is family-friendly yet elegant enough for entertaining.

SALAD INGREDIENTS

- » 2 cans wild Alaskan Pink Salmon, drained
- » 1 c chopped green lettuce
- » 1 c chopped romaine lettuce
- » 1 c baby kale
- » 1 c chopped strawberries
- » ½ c chopped cucumbers
- » 1 spring onion, finely chopped
- » 1 medium avocado, chopped
- » *Optional topping:* ½ c granola or ½ c nuts or seeds

CREAMY STRAWBERRY BALSAMIC DRESSING

- » ½ c chopped strawberries
- » ¼ c balsamic vinegar
- » 3 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- » 2 Tbsp tahini
- » 1 clove garlic, minced
- » 2 tsp dried oregano
- » 1 tsp sea salt

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Add all the salad ingredients to a large bowl and toss to combine.
- 2 Add all the dressing ingredients to a high-speed blender and blend until smooth. Add water as needed to reach your desired consistency.
- 3 Drizzle the dressing onto the salad and top with optional granola, nuts or seeds.

SERVES
2



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AlenaKaz / Depositphotos.com

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Mint & Garlic Green Beans

The flavours go so well together, this is guaranteed to be your new favourite way to enjoy green beans. The chopped almonds add a delicious crunch and nutty taste, while the mint adds an unexpected freshness against the strong garlic flavour. Served warm or cold, it's the perfect side dish for your next dinner party or backyard BBQ.

INGREDIENTS

- » 1 lb green beans, ends trimmed
- » 2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- » 4 cloves garlic, minced
- » ½ bunch fresh mint, chopped
- » Sea salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- » 4 Tbsp roasted almonds, chopped

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill a large sauté pan or skillet halfway with water. Add 1 tsp salt and bring water to a boil.
2. Add green beans, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer when the green beans start to soften (approx. 3-5 minutes). The green beans should be tender on the inside and crunchy on the outside.
3. Strain the green beans using a colander and allow them to drain in the sink.
4. Return the pan to the heat and add olive oil and garlic. Sauté over medium-low heat until the garlic becomes aromatic and colours lightly.
5. Turn off the heat and add in the drained green beans and chopped fresh mint. Use a pair of tongs to mix. Taste and season with additional sea salt and cracked black pepper, if desired.
6. Add to a serving plate and top with chopped almonds and more fresh mint if desired.

SERVES
4

No-Bake Brownie Bites

Craving something sweet and chocolatey? Before you reach for something processed, make these no-bake brownie bites instead. It takes less than 3 minutes to whip up a small batch.

INGREDIENTS

- » ½ c cocoa powder
- » ½ c nut or seed butter
- » 3 Tbsp pure maple syrup
- » 4 Tbsp coconut milk (or milk of choice)
- » 2 Tbsp coconut flour
- » ½ tsp pure vanilla extract
- » Pinch sea salt
- » ¼ c dark chocolate chips

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add all ingredients to a bowl (except the chocolate chips) and mix well to combine. Add a bit more milk or coconut flour as needed to get the dough to the right consistency.
2. Wet your hands before rolling the dough into 1-inch balls.
3. Stud each brownie bite with a few chocolate chips.
4. Store in an air-tight container in the fridge or freezer.



6-8
BITES



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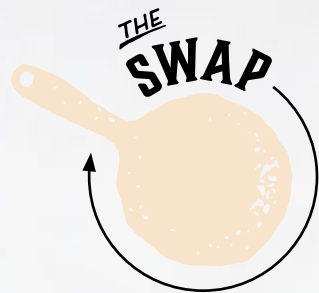
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SUGARY CEREALS ARE OUT . . .

STRAWBERRY MATCHA CHIA OAT MIX IS IN!

Maria D'Alessandro, RHN

Cereals tend to be a quick morning option, especially when you are experiencing the rush of trying to get out the door on time. They can also be full of processed sugars, and artificial ingredients that lack nutritional value.

TRADITIONAL CHOICE:

Most traditional cereal choices have high concentrations of refined grains and sugars which can increase your risk of several health issues like diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, depression, and heart disease. The rapid rise and fall of blood sugar levels due to these high concentrations can also lead to mood swings and anxiety.

THE SWAP:

It is important to start the day off right to keep you energised, focused, and alert for the rest of the day. Swap those sugary morning cereals for a high protein, blood-sugar-balancing option like this strawberry matcha chia seed oat mix. *Chia seeds* are high in healthy fats and are a good source of protein which can reduce the risk of diseases like diabetes. Chia seeds are also high in fibre and omega-3s which can be beneficial for gut health and reduce the risk of heart disease. *Rolled oats* can have a positive impact on blood sugar as they are low on the glyce-mic index. *Matcha* comes with an array of health benefits: it's high in antioxidants and may lower cell damage while also reducing the risk of chronic health conditions.

*A healthier you is just
a simple swap away.*



Lovelymama / Depositphotos.com

STRAWBERRY MATCHA CHIA OAT MIX

Ingredients

- » 1 c rolled oats
- » 1¼ c unsweetened almond milk
- » 2 Tbsp chia seeds
- » 1 tsp matcha powder
- » ¼ tsp pure vanilla extract
- » Top with cinnamon and sliced strawberries

Instructions

1. Add the oats, almond milk, chia seeds, matcha powder, and vanilla extract to a bowl and stir until well combined.
2. Cover and place in the fridge overnight or for at least 2 hours.
3. Top with cinnamon and sliced strawberries.

Prep time: 10 minutes

Set time: 8 hours

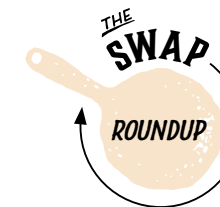
Serves: 1

Store in the fridge for up to 2 days

Enjoy! 🍴



Illustration: pakowacz / Depositphotos.com



BENEFITS BY NATURE Organic Rolled Oats

Cholesterol-Free

ELMHURST Unsweetened Almond Milk

No Artificial Flavours



ORGANIC TRADITIONS Premium Matcha Tea

Antioxidant

PRANA ORGANIC Whole Black Chia Seeds

Non-GMO



THE FAMILY TABLE

SUMMER SWEET & SOUR

Dr. Sarah White, ND

Greek Yoghurt Bark WITH SUMMER FRUITS AND HERBS

Embrace the flavours of summer with this refreshing and healthy Greek yoghurt bark. This recipe combines high-protein Greek yoghurt, naturally sweetened with seasonal fruits and the aromatic touch of fresh herbs. It's a delightful low-sugar, high-protein treat that's perfect for a light dessert or a nutritious snack on a hot day.

INGREDIENTS

- » 2 Tbsp honey (or maple syrup)
- » 1 Tbsp lime juice
- » 2 c plain Greek yoghurt (full-fat or low-fat)
- » 3 c mixed seasonal fruits, such as berries, cherries, peaches, plums, or grapes, cut into small pieces
- » 2 Tbsp each of mint and basil, finely chopped
- » 1 Tbsp lemon balm, finely chopped
- » *Optional toppings:* desiccated coconut, edible flowers, bee pollen, chopped nuts, or a drizzle of extra honey

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Line a baking sheet with some parchment paper.
 2. In a bowl, mix the honey (or maple syrup) and lime juice into the Greek yoghurt until well combined.
 3. Evenly spread the Greek yoghurt mixture onto the prepared baking sheet. Aim for a thickness of about ¼ to ½ inch.
 4. Evenly distribute the chopped fruits and herbs over the yoghurt layer, gently pressing them in. Sprinkle any optional toppings, such as desiccated coconut, edible flowers, bee pollen, or chopped nuts, over the bark.
 5. Place the baking sheet in the freezer for at least 3-4 hours or until the bark is solid.
 6. Once frozen, remove the bark from the freezer and let it sit for a few minutes to soften slightly.
 7. Break the bark into pieces and serve it immediately.
- Store leftover bark in an airtight container in the freezer.

SERVES
6

Vegan Chamomile Flan

Chamomile is well-known for its calming properties, gently soothing the nervous system and promoting relaxation. This vegan chamomile flan is a delightful way to incorporate this beneficial herb into a dessert. Vegan, and sweetened naturally with maple syrup, it's a healthier dessert option that's good for your well-being.

INGREDIENTS

- » ½ c dried chamomile flowers
- » 2 c unsweetened plant-based milk (almond, soy, or oat works best here)
- » ½ c maple syrup, plus extra for drizzling
- » ¼ c tapioca or arrowroot powder
- » 1 tsp vanilla extract
- » ¼ tsp sea salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. Add the dried chamomile to the milk and heat over medium until the milk is simmering, then remove the saucepan from heat, cover, and allow to steep for 30 minutes to fully infuse the milk with the chamomile flavour.
3. Once steeped, strain the chamomile-infused milk through a fine-mesh sieve, discard the used chamomile flowers and return the infused milk to the saucepan.
4. Whisk in the maple syrup, tapioca (or arrowroot powder), vanilla, and salt until the mixture is smooth and well combined.
5. Cook the mixture over medium heat, whisking constantly, until it thickens and reaches a gentle simmer (about 5-7 minutes).
6. Evenly pour the prepared flan mixture into six ramekins. Place the filled ramekins in a baking dish and carefully pour hot water into the dish until it reaches approximately halfway up the sides of the ramekins, creating a water bath.
7. Cover the baking dish loosely with aluminum foil and bake for 50-60 minutes, or until the flan is set around the edges but still slightly wobbly in the center.
8. Allow the ramekins to cool in the water bath for about 30 minutes, then transfer the ramekins to the refrigerator and chill for at least 4 hours—or preferably overnight—to allow the flan to set.

To serve, run a thin knife around the edge of each flan to loosen it from the ramekin. Invert each flan onto a serving plate and drizzle with extra maple syrup.

SERVES
6



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Illustration: AlenaKaz / Depositphotos.com

Thai Basil Shrimp Stir Fry

Stir fries are a summer weekday evening go-to since they're quick and easy, and there's absolutely no oven time required. Thai basil, with its distinctive anise-like flavour, not only provides a unique taste to your stir fry but it also comes with potential health benefits. Thai basil adds antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties to this dish along with a burst of freshness. This Thai basil shrimp stir fry is perfect for warm summer evenings when you want something flavorful and light.

INGREDIENTS

- » 2 Tbsp coconut or avocado oil
- » 2 cloves garlic, minced
- » 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- » ½ an onion, thinly sliced
- » 1-pound large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- » 2-3 Thai chilies, thinly sliced (adjust to your spice preference)
- » ¼ c soy sauce or coconut aminos
- » 2 Tbsp fish sauce
- » 1 Tbsp coconut sugar
- » 1 lime, juiced
- » 1 c fresh Thai basil leaves
- » Coconut rice, for serving (see recipe next page)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet or wok over high heat.
2. Add the minced garlic, sliced red bell pepper, and sliced onion to the hot oil and stir fry for about 2-3 minutes, or until the vegetables are slightly softened.
3. Add the shrimp and Thai chilies to the skillet and continue to stir fry until the shrimp turns pink and is cooked through (approx. 3-5 minutes).
4. In a small bowl, whisk together the soy sauce, fish sauce, coconut sugar, and lime juice. Pour this sauce over the shrimp and vegetables in the skillet and stir to combine.
5. Cook for another minute or two, allowing the sauce to thicken slightly. Remove the skillet from the heat and stir in the fresh Thai basil leaves and serve over coconut rice.

Coconut Rice

Coconut rice is a versatile and flavourful side dish that complements a wide array of cuisines. Its creamy texture and subtle sweetness make it an excellent side for both savoury and sweet dishes—but it works especially well with the sour and spicy flavours of a Thai basil shrimp stir fry. Coconut rice can also be easily meal-prepped, making it a convenient option for busy weeknights or packed lunches as it maintains its delightful taste and texture even when it's reheated.

INGREDIENTS

- » 1 c long-grain rice (jasmine or basmati)
- » 1½ c coconut milk (full-fat or light)
- » ½ c water
- » ¼ tsp salt

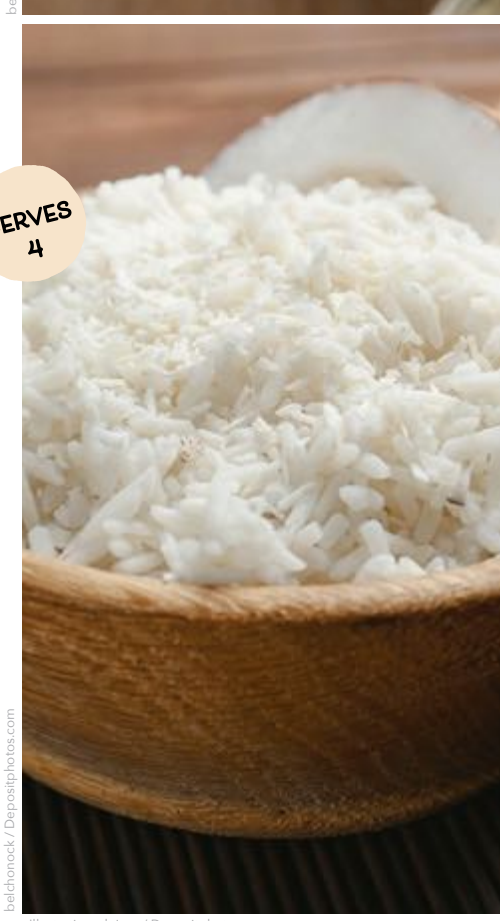
INSTRUCTIONS

1. Rinse the rice under cold water until the water runs clear. This helps remove excess starch and prevents the rice from becoming too sticky.
2. In a medium saucepan, combine the rinsed rice, coconut milk, water and salt. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium-high heat.
3. Once boiling, reduce the heat to low, cover the saucepan tightly with a lid, and simmer for 25-30 minutes, or until all the liquid has been absorbed and the rice is tender.
4. Remove the saucepan from the heat and let it sit, covered, for 10 minutes to allow the rice to steam and fully absorb any remaining moisture.

Fluff the coconut rice with a fork before serving.



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Berberine 4x: A Sweet Solution to Support Blood Sugar and Wellness



Berberine has emerged as a powerful natural compound that supports healthy glucose metabolism, heart health, and weight management. But not all Berberine supplements are created equal. Platinum Naturals, a trusted Canadian brand since 1996, offers a unique solution to optimize heart health and support normal blood sugar, while ensuring superior quality and effectiveness.

What is Berberine?

Berberine is a bioactive compound found in several plants, including the Berberis species. Used in traditional medicine for centuries, it supports metabolic health, cardiovascular function, and immune response. However, its benefits are often limited due to poor absorption in the body.

The Benefits of Berberine

Berberine is well-known for its ability to support healthy glucose metabolism. Research suggests it enhances insulin sensitivity and helps drive sugar into muscles and the liver for energy. This makes it a great option for managing normal blood sugar naturally while also promoting fat loss, energy production, and cardiovascular health.

The Power of Berberine 4x

While Berberine is highly beneficial, it is naturally poorly absorbed in the body. That's where **Berberine 4x from Platinum Naturals** stands out.

4x Bioavailability - Formulated with Omega Absorb™, our award-winning delivery system, that suspends nutrients in healthy oils for enhanced absorption.

Enhanced with Eucommia and Chromium:

- **Eucommia** - A traditional herbal extract that supports cardiovascular health and metabolic function.
- **Chromium** - An essential mineral that has been shown to help support healthy glucose metabolism.

The Perfect Duo: Berberine 4x & Total Liver Care

Using **Berberine 4x** as well as **Total Liver Care** is a great way to support metabolic health and liver function. While Berberine 4x helps to support normal glucose levels, cholesterol levels and cardiovascular health, Total Liver Care provides potent antioxidants that aid detoxification, energy production, and overall liver health, making them an excellent choice for optimal wellness.

Why Choose Platinum Naturals?

At Platinum Naturals, quality and absorption matter. Our science-backed formulations, pure ingredients, and innovative delivery system ensures maximum effectiveness. We use only high-quality ingredients, free from preservatives, additives or fillers like magnesium stearate or titanium dioxide.

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- **HMF® Forte** supports intestinal health in adults and children, delivering 20 billion CFU daily, with proprietary strains and fructooligosaccharides (FOS) to promote a healthy gut flora.
- **HMF® Travel** provides 35 billion CFU of probiotics per day, including *Saccharomyces boulardii*, to support gastrointestinal health while traveling.
- **HMF® IBS Relief** is a probiotic formulation that provides 25 billion CFU per dose. This clinically researched formula is designed to help improve symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) within six weeks of use, making it an ideal maintenance solution for individuals aged 11 years and older.



baibaz / Depositphotos.com

DID YOU KNOW?

HEMP HEARTS

A Nutritious Comeback Story

Melody Maier, CNP

HISTORY

Hemp hearts (i.e., shelled hemp seeds) are the soft inner part of the hemp seed. With a mild, nutty flavour, these versatile seeds have been a valuable addition to both sweet and savoury meals since prehistoric times. Chinese records from 2800 BCE document hemp as one of the first cultivated crops, useful for both foods and textiles.¹

Hemp hearts were enjoyed freely until 1937 when they became strictly regulated due to their association with the Cannabis sativa plant family.² By 1998 after years of organised advocacy, it was proven that hemp hearts contain less than 0.003 percent tetrahydrocannabinol (TCH) and have no psychoactive effects.³ This was a major accomplishment because hemp hearts have much to offer nutritionally.

HEALTH BENEFITS

When shopping for hemp hearts, you might find them in the supplement aisle rather than the grocery section. This

is because of their supplement-like benefits. A three-tablespoon serving of hemp hearts provides 10 grams of complete protein, two and a half grams of omega-3s, and 50 percent of the recommended daily value of magnesium.

Approximately 30 percent of hemp hearts are made up of polyunsaturated fatty acids—the healthy, anti-inflammatory fats you may know as omega-3 and omega-6.⁴ These essential fatty acids are literally essential, meaning the body can not produce them on its own and must obtain them through food or supplements. Some of the best dietary sources of essential fatty acids include cold-water fish, flax-seeds, walnuts, and, of course, hemp hearts.

Tip: Omega-3s are sensitive to heat and light, so store your hemp hearts in the refrigerator after opening to maintain freshness and quality.

For references visit ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM25

Creamy Vegan Caesar Dressing

Consider skipping the conventional bottled salad dressings—many are loaded with sugars and inflammatory oils. This homemade creamy vegan Caesar dressing comes together in minutes with just a few simple ingredients. Capers impart a savoury, pungent kick, delivering bold flavour blended with creamy hemp hearts.

INGREDIENTS

- » ½ c hemp hearts
- » ⅓ c water
- » ¼ c fresh lemon juice
- » 1 tsp balsamic vinegar
- » 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- » 1 tsp garlic, minced (1 clove)
- » 1 tsp nutritional yeast
- » 1 Tbsp capers
- » ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add all the ingredients to a small blender.
2. Blend until smooth and creamy.
3. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.
4. Serve immediately or store in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. 🌱

DID YOU KNOW?
Roundup

MANITOBA HARVEST
Hemp Hearts
—Organic—



KOOPS' ORGANIC
Dijon Mustard
—Gluten-Free—

SIMPLY ORGANIC
Black Peppercorn
—Organic—



MEZZETTA CAPERS
—Savoury Pungent Flavour—



FROM THE

GROCERY AISLE

Put some pizzazz into your next summer salad. Try adding fun herbs, dressings, and toppings. You can find them in the grocery aisle.

Kosher



HERBS & SPICES



Aromatic



Gluten-Free

Non-GMO



SALAD DRESSINGS



Zero Calories

Vegan



NUTS & SEEDS

Organic



Rich in Iron

Gluten-Free





Fuel Your Day with Plant-Based Protein

Raw Organic Protein is a Certified Organic, Non-GMO Project Verified raw vegan protein powder made with 13 raw sprouted proteins delivering 22g of protein with a complete profile of all the essential amino acids along with added fat-soluble vitamins, probiotics and enzymes. Raw Organic Protein contains fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K and supports intestinal health with live probiotics all while helping digest proteins with its enzymes.

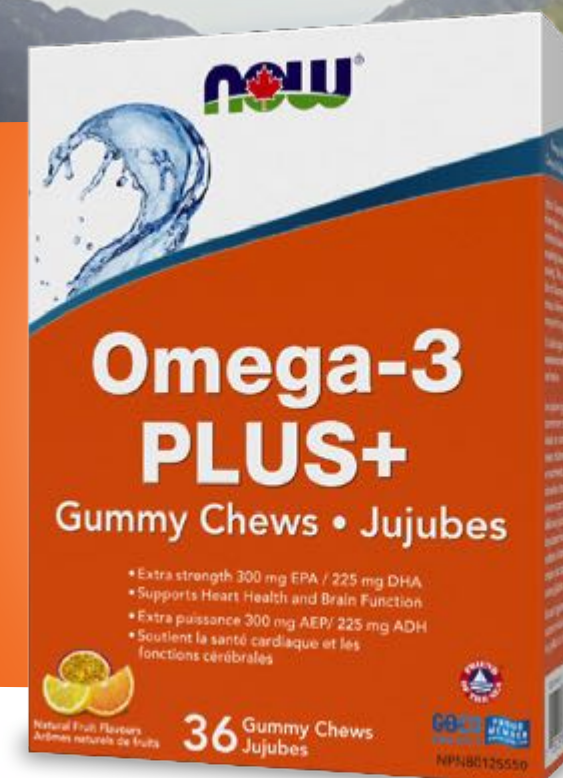


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