



Natural Supplements Handbook

Harnessing Nature's Wisdom:
A Guide to Restoring Balance

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01 Introduction

Before we dive into supplements, let's talk about whole-food nutrition. I always emphasize meeting your dietary needs through **balanced eating first**—because no supplement can replace real, nourishing food! That said, natural supplementation can be a powerful tool when used intentionally. I'm a big advocate for personalized choices, so I recommend testing for deficiencies (like iron or vitamin D) or tracking your symptoms before adding anything to your routine.



02

How to Use This Guide

In alignment with my commitment to natural healing—free from pharmaceutical intervention—I’ve put together this guide featuring some of the best natural supplements that Mother Nature has to offer. These natural remedies work with your body to support healing, recovery, and overall health.

A quick note: Whether it’s a traditional or alternative approach, always check with your doctor first—especially if you’re taking medications or managing specific health conditions.

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Adaptogens

I'm a huge fan of adaptogens, which is why I'm giving them the spotlight. Used in traditional medicine for thousands of years, they're finally gaining recognition in the West. These powerful herbs have long been known to improve vitality, longevity, and energy.

What makes them special? They help your body maintain homeostasis, or equilibrium, in the face of stressors; and you can take them long-term without worrying about harsh side effects.

Adaptogens work by targeting the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, a neuroendocrine system which plays a key role in how your body responds to stress. By regulating this system, they help bring your body back into balance.



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What are Adaptogens?

Simply put, adaptogens are natural substances—primarily herbs and mushrooms—that **increase your body's ability to handle stress while promoting overall resilience.** They support the production of stress-related neurotransmitters and hormones, helping to regulate key functions like digestion, mood, temperature control, and immunity.

You might hear them referred to as “trophorestorative” or “**modulating**” herbs—meaning they don't just push your body in one direction. Instead, they fine-tune whatever needs the most support. Pretty cool, right?

Generally speaking, adaptogens help reduce stress and boost energy. **Some are more stimulating and uplifting, while others are grounding and calming.** Over time, they build up in your system and help modulate cortisol levels, making them a natural way to support energy, cognition, mood, and even hormone balance.



A woman with long, wavy blonde hair is shown in profile, looking towards the left. She is wearing a white, long-sleeved, form-fitting dress with a cutout at the waist and a flowing skirt. Her hands are raised to her hair, and she is wearing several bracelets on her wrists. The background is a lush green field with tall grass and trees in the distance. The image is framed by a white border with decorative white line-art leaves and stems on the left and right sides. A cluster of golden starburst graphics is located on the right side of the image.

Work with your
inner healer

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05 Stimulating Adaptogens

These are some of the most potent sources of physical and mental energy. Reach for them when the body feels depleted, deficient, sluggish, or even down. What's fascinating about this group of plants is that most of them thrive in harsh climates, like Siberia or mountain ranges—these plants truly know what real stress feels like!

- **GINSENG** (*Panax spp*)

Ginseng has been valued in traditional Chinese medicine for over 2,000 years. Known for its benefits to the entire body, **it's particularly helpful for boosting vitality, improving fertility and libido, supporting the immune system, and revitalizing energy.**

Additionally, ginseng may protect the liver, balance blood sugar, aid in erectile dysfunction, improve sexual health, and help with depression.





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Stimulating Adaptogens

- **RHODIOLA** (*Rhodiola rosea*)

Rhodiola has quickly become a favorite for boosting energy, focus, and vitality—it literally helps you get your mojo back! Also known as "golden root," it's a natural stimulant that helps balance key neurotransmitters like serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine.

Taking **Rhodiola can improve concentration, reduce mental fatigue, ease anxiety and irritability**, and decrease the frequency and severity of hot flashes during menopause.

By normalizing stress hormones, especially cortisol, it improves mood and fights fatigue. It also balances melatonin and serotonin, which can **support better sleep**, particularly for those dealing with stress.

Additionally, Rhodiola boosts mitochondria function, improving energy metabolism and ATP production, which **provides cellular-level energy** to fuel your body.



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Stimulating Adaptogens

- **MACA** (*Lepidium meyenii*)

Often referred to as "Peruvian ginseng," is a root vegetable native to the high Andes mountains of Peru, Maca is especially known for its ability to **boost energy levels and endurance**. Maca root is a hormone modulator and strong anti-inflammatory that regulates adrenal and thyroid function and **also works as a steroid hormone**—so it's pretty powerful. In fact, some users describe it as giving them a natural high!

Additionally, maca **enhances libido and improves fertility** in both men and women. It has also been linked to improved mood and reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Maca has been popular among bodybuilders and athletes for years because of claims that it **helps build muscle, enhances endurance performance, and increases strength**.

There is also evidence that it might **help with sexual dysfunction** in post-menopausal women who use antidepressants.



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Balancing Adaptogens

These midrange adaptogens offer stress support for a wide range of conditions, providing both energizing and calming effects simultaneously.

- **ASHWAGANDHA** (*Withania somnifera*)

I'd call this one a relaxant—but in an energized-yet-chill kind of way. The nutty, aromatic root of ashwagandha is said to give you the strength and vitality of a horse! But beyond that, it nourishes and strengthens the nervous system, adrenals, thyroid, and immune function while also reducing inflammation.

Ashwagandha is **especially known for easing stress and anxiety**. It can also boost libido, relieve chronic pain, and promote overall vitality. Plus, it has been shown to support those dealing with PTSD.





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Balancing Adaptogens

Because ashwagandha lowers cortisol, it **helps improve insulin sensitivity and blood sugar regulation**—making you less likely to store excess fat and improve your body composition.

- **SCHIZANDRA** (*SCHISANDRA CHINENSIS*)

Known as the "five flavor fruit," schizandra (magnolia berry) tastes simultaneously sweet, salty, bitter, sour, and pungent. (*You either love it or hate it, but adding it to coffee with sweetener makes it much more pleasant. Trust me!*) In traditional Chinese medicine, the flavor of an herb indicates the constitution for which it is most beneficial, and schizandra's multifaceted flavor means **it's a balancing, tonic herb for almost any person.**

It stimulates your central nervous system, improves cognition, and balances neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine—**giving you calm energy with improved focus.**





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Balancing Adaptogens

Schizandra acts as a phytoestrogen, meaning it has a mild estrogen-like effect in the body. This makes it particularly helpful for **balancing hormonal fluctuations**, especially during menopause, where it may reduce the frequency and severity of hot flashes.

Schizandra can also **help with your fitness and endurance** by improving blood vessel flexibility (thanks to its phytoestrogen properties) and strengthening your mitochondria (your cells' energy powerhouses), ultimately enhancing exercise capacity and performance.

Caution: Avoid taking it late in the afternoon or evening, as it has a caffeine-like effect on alertness and could disrupt your sleep!



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Calming Adaptogens

These are my go-to herbs for calm, steady energy and anxiety relief. Rooted in the healing tradition of Ayurveda, these adaptogens offer gentle yet effective support. They may not be the best fit if you're looking for an energizing boost, but they're generally safe, soothing, and well-tolerated by most.

- **HOLY BASIL** (*Ocimum sanctum*, syn. *O. tenuiflorum*)

Holy basil, or tulsi, is a sacred herb that has been cherished in India for centuries, often found growing in pots around temples. Its potent aroma fills the air when brushed against, evoking a sense of calm and clarity. It has gained popularity for its ability to **both calm and energize, ease anxiety and grief, and support balanced cortisol and blood sugar levels.**





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Calming Adaptogens

Ayurvedic practitioners consider Tulsi “the great protector”. It acts as an antioxidant, **strengthens the immune system**, helping to ward off colds and infections, supports digestion and **reduces inflammation to ease chronic pain**.

On an emotional level, **it promotes resilience, lifting feelings of hopelessness and enhancing a sense of connection with the world**. Think of Holy Basil as yoga or meditation in a cup—revered in traditional medicine for its ability to promote a healthy mind, body, and spirit.

Holy Basil is so broadly beneficial for metabolic health that studies have concluded that it is an effective treatment for lifestyle-related chronic diseases including diabetes, metabolic syndrome, and psychological stress.





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Calming Adaptogens

- **GOTU KOLA** (*Centella asiatica*)

Gotu kola is best known for its brain-boosting benefits, often used to **enhance mental function, reduce anxiety, and improve circulation throughout the body**—including to the brain.

Traditionally included in ginkgo supplements and even fed to Indian children before school, it's one of the more subtle adaptogens but blends well with others like holy basil for a stronger effect.

Beyond cognitive support, **gotu kola is a powerful ally for connective tissue, collagen production, and vascular health.** It's commonly found in scar and wound ointments as well as remedies for varicose veins, offering a gentle yet long-lasting healing process.





08 FAQ on Adaptogens




- **Is it okay to combine different adaptogens?**

Yes, you totally can! I recommend starting with the adaptogen that targets your biggest concern—whether that’s brain fog, fatigue, or hot flashes. Stick with it for a couple of weeks and see how it’s working for you. Once you feel like you’ve got that under control, feel free to add another one for any secondary symptoms. There’s no harm in mixing them, but if you don’t feel like adding one is making a difference, don’t stress it. Most women begin with ashwagandha for general support.

- **What should you look for when choosing adaptogens?**

Purity is key! You want to go for organic and high-quality sources. Always check the label to make sure it’s certified organic and that the dosage is clearly stated. That way, you know exactly what you’re getting in every dose.





FAQ on Adaptogens

- **Is it safe to use adaptogens long-term?**

Adaptogens work best when you use them consistently, but like anything, it's good to give your body a little reset. I suggest using them for about 6 to 7 weeks, then taking a short break. After a while, you can shorten the cycle to 3 weeks on, 2 days off to avoid building a tolerance and to keep things fresh.

- **Does it matter how you take adaptogens?**

Not at all! Whether you prefer powders, tea, capsules, or tinctures, they all work just fine. Go with what's easiest for you to stick with. If you're a smoothie lover, powders can be fun to mix in, and tinctures in tea are a nice ritual. The most important part is being consistent!

- **Can adaptogens be used as a preventative?**

Absolutely! Adaptogens help regulate stress and keep your body in balance, so they're great for prevention too. You don't have to be feeling off to benefit from them.

- **Can I get off my medication?**

It's important to always work with your doctor when considering tapering off any prescription medication. Gradually reduce your dosage while monitoring how your body responds. Adaptogens can support you during this transition by helping manage any symptoms that arise.



09 Final thoughts...

Nature has always provided us with powerful allies for balance, vitality, and well-being. From adaptogens that help the body navigate stress to herbs that nourish the mind and body, these natural supplements offer gentle yet profound support. The key is to approach them with curiosity and intention—listening to your body, experimenting mindfully, and choosing high-quality sources.

Remember, true wellness isn't about quick fixes but about creating a lifestyle that supports your energy, clarity, and resilience over time. Whether you're looking to calm your mind, boost your focus, or strengthen your body, there's a plant ally ready to support you. Skip the chemicals and let Mother Nature do her magic!

Here's to honoring your body's wisdom and embracing nature's gifts with gratitude and trust. 🌿

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