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Your Guide to Smarter Eating and Better Living

Vol. 9, No. 1 · Free
Winter 2025

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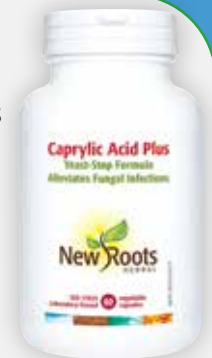
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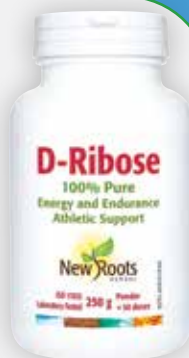
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Editor's Letter



Wishing our readers all the best for 2025!

Along with the hope for a happy and healthy new year, many of us use the start of the year to make grand resolutions. But statistically, over 80% of these pledges will have fizzled out by February. So, I propose we commence the new year by celebrating all that is good about ourselves, our friends, and our loved ones. And

if we feel the need, we can “resolve” to simply support one another with small, manageable steps towards improving our health and wellbeing, all year long. Every constructive step we take, no matter how small, can create a positive impact on our physical and mental health, as well as on our relationships.

Our community of health professionals has provided a wealth of information to support your health and wellbeing this winter. Whether you're looking to get more active, improve your diet, or find ways to reduce stress levels, we've got you covered. We also take a look at how hard some of our vital organs work for us, and what we can do to help keep them performing more efficiently. We hope you will find some nuggets of wisdom that resonate and motivate you to keep your positive momentum and *Flourish* all year long.

Happy reading!

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Editor-in-Chief

Flourish

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Is Selecting Stress Relief Stressing You Out?

by Jill Northrup, ND

Patients seeking guidance and support for stress reduction are incredibly common in naturopathic practice. Due to the increasing prevalence of anxiety disorders and the health impacts of unmanaged anxiety, natural products for relieving stress are needed now more than ever. With so many options, it can be difficult to understand which can be useful and when. Here is a breakdown of some of the most commonly recommended supplements by naturopathic doctors to support anxiety naturally.

Ashwagandha

Ashwagandha is a traditional Ayurvedic herb classified as an adaptogen. The term “adaptogen” is used to describe botanicals which possess properties that enhance the body’s resilience to stress. As per its classification, ashwagandha has been shown to significantly reduce stress and anxiety among healthy adults and those with psychological disorders. Ashwagandha also helps lower cortisol, a commonly used biological marker for stress. In addition to stress-relieving effects, ashwagandha has also been shown to improve mood.



Orally, ashwagandha seems to be well-tolerated; however, certain people should not consume it. Ashwagandha has been associated with case reports of hepatotoxicity, so those with liver disease should abstain from using it. Ashwagandha should also be avoided during pregnancy and lactation, as well as by those who have thyroid and autoimmune disorders. Ashwagandha can also interact with medications, including those for blood pressure, diabetes, immunosuppression, and the thyroid.

L-Theanine

L-Theanine is a bioactive amino acid naturally occurring in green tea, with relaxation-promoting effects. L-Theanine can pass the blood-brain barrier, a membrane impermeable to many other substances. Within the brain, L-theanine generates *alpha* brain waves.

This electrical activity is associated with wakeful relaxation. Amongst healthy adults, 200 mg of L-theanine per day for 4 weeks significantly reduced self-reported depression and anxiety while reducing sleep-onset time, in comparison to placebo. L-Theanine administration also significantly improved several measures of cognition, including verbal fluency, letter fluency, and executive function.

In combination with caffeine, L-theanine also shows favourable effects on attention, memory, cognition, and hyperactivity. Male children with ADHD administered L-theanine with caffeine experienced improved sustained attention and reduced impulsivity.

L-Theanine has also been shown to improve sleep quality amongst boys with ADHD aged 9–12 years, with no adverse effects.

L-Theanine may possess blood pressure–lowering effects. Therefore, L-theanine should be used with caution amongst those taking antihypertensive medications or in conjunction with other supplements with blood pressure–lowering effects. L-Theanine may also interact with central nervous system (CNS)–depressant medications.

Lavender

Lavender may be a suitable option for those looking for both stress relief and sleep support. Oral lavender supplementation exhibits anxiolytic effects in adults with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD). Higher doses of lavender (160 mg per day) were associated with greater reductions in anxiety in comparison to lower doses (80 mg per day) after 10 weeks of treatment. The anxiety-reducing effects of lavender treatment were comparable to treatment with conventional anxiety therapy with paroxetine, a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI). The rate of adverse effects for those taking lavender was comparable to placebo and lower than that of paroxetine treatment.



Oral lavender supplementation has also been shown to improve sleep quality and reduce anxiety-related sleep disturbances (without sedation) in adults with anxiety. As a potential alternative for those who cannot tolerate oral preparations, lavender essential-oil aromatherapy has also been shown to improve sleep quality in various populations. Lavender may interact with CNS-depressant medications and products with sedative activity.



Saffron

Crocus sativa, also known as saffron, is an herb with anti-inflammatory, antitumour, and anticonvulsant properties, as well as benefits for learning and memory. Saffron has also been shown to support mood and reduce stress levels, making this nutraceutical an option for those with anxiety accompanied by depression. Saffron has been shown to reduce anxiety in those with GAD, and to improve mood in those with major depressive disorder (MDD). Saffron’s antidepressant effects are also comparable to pharmacological agents prescribed for MDD, but with fewer adverse effects.

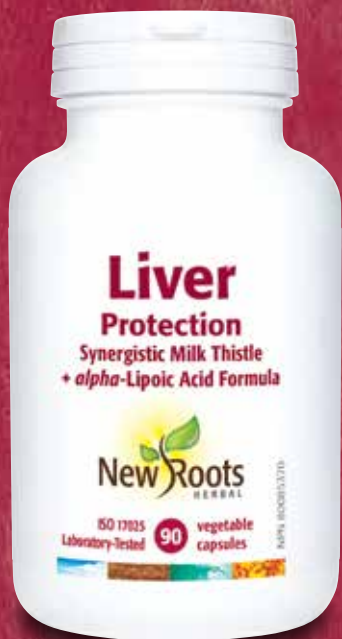
Studies have also examined saffron as an adjunctive treatment to conventional pharmacotherapy with SSRIs. Alongside pharmacotherapy, saffron contributed to further improvements in anxiety and depression compared to pharmacotherapy alone.

Safety information for saffron includes interactions with supplements and medications which exert blood sugar– and blood pressure–lowering activity. Saffron may also interact with CNS depressants and supplements with sedative activity and can exacerbate bipolar disorder.

This ingredient is one of the few that can be safely used by teens aged 12 and up. Families looking for nonprescription solutions for mood balance and stress relief can find comfort in this product’s effectiveness.



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General Supports

Other, more foundational supports should also be considered when aiming to reduce stress and anxiety.

Magnesium plays a role in regulating cortisol release, and it also impacts neurotransmitter systems implicated in depression. Those with magnesium deficiency are at an increased risk of mood disorders. Magnesium exerts both anxiolytic and antidepressant effects, and it can be used as an adjunct to antidepressant treatment.

Magnesium can interact with a large variety of medications, including antibiotics, antacids, cardiovascular, and Parkinson's disease medications, amongst others. Magnesium may also be contraindicated in those with kidney disorders, bleeding disorders, and cardiovascular conditions.

Anxiety can also be a symptom of vitamin B₁₂ deficiency. Higher dietary intake of B vitamins, especially biotin, is associated with a lower prevalence of anxiety and stress. B vitamins are important for both the synthesis and regulation of dopamine and serotonin, which are implicated in depression and anxiety. Supplementation with B vitamins has been shown to benefit stress.

B vitamins may interact with antihypertensives, anticonvulsants, and Parkinson's disease medications.

Note

If you are looking for naturopathic stress and anxiety management, it is important to consult a health-care practitioner to determine which nutraceuticals are most appropriate for you. The safety information discussed in this article is for information purposes only and is not all-encompassing. If you are taking medication or have a preexisting health condition, speak to a health-care practitioner before implementing a nutraceutical.



Dr. Jill Northrup, ND

A Toronto-based naturopathic doctor with a passion for health and natural medicines, she values an evidence-based treatment approach and emphasizes patient education and preventative medicine in her practice.

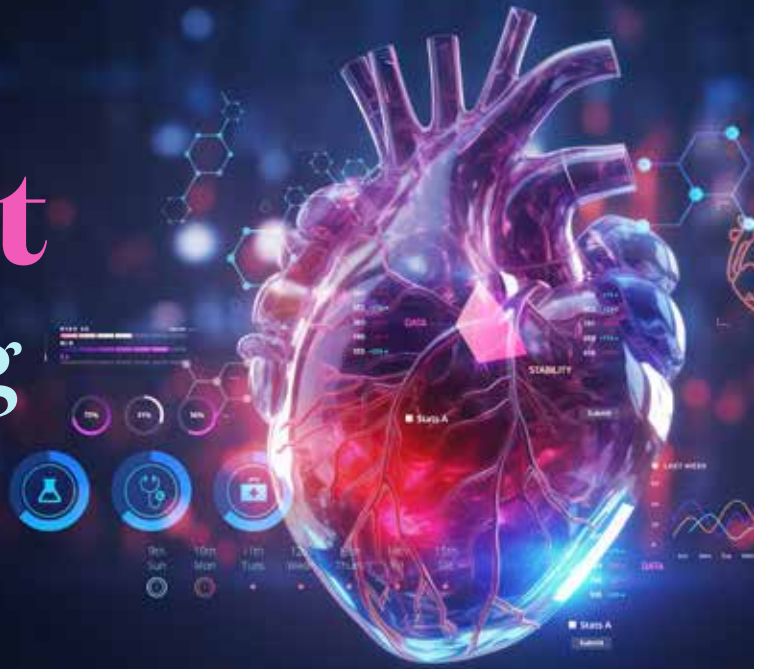
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The Heart

Your Lifelong Companion

by Kaitlyn Zorn, HBSc, ND



The heart, a central component of the human body, is more than just a biological pump: It is a symbol of life, emotion, and vitality. Let's dive into the anatomy of the heart, its crucial functions, and natural ways to nurture this organ.

Understanding the Heart's Anatomy and Function

The human heart, roughly the size of a closed fist, is located in the thoracic cavity between the lungs. This muscular organ is designed for endurance and efficiency, and consists of four chambers: the left and right atria (upper chambers) and the left and right ventricles (lower chambers). These chambers work in a coordinated manner to circulate blood throughout the body, delivering oxygen and nutrients to tissues and removing waste products.

The heart's function is governed by an intrinsic electrical system,

with the sinoatrial node (SA), located in the right atrium, acting as the natural pacemaker. This system ensures that the heart beats in a synchronized rhythm, vital for effective blood circulation. The electrical signal is influenced by the autonomic nervous system (ANS), which integrates information from the parasympathetic (rest-and-digest) and sympathetic (fight-or-flight) nervous system. Sympathetic activation increases heart rate and contractility, preparing the body for rapid response, while the parasympathetic system slows the heart rate, aiding in relaxation and recovery. We can externally influence this system through stress reduction and other ways to help lower the sympathetic part of the nervous system.

How the Heart Takes Care of You

The heart plays a critical role in maintaining homeostasis—a stable internal environment in the body. By continuously pumping blood, the heart ensures that all body parts receive the necessary oxygen and nutrients. It also helps regulate blood pressure, supports the removal of metabolic waste, and aids in maintaining a balanced body temperature.

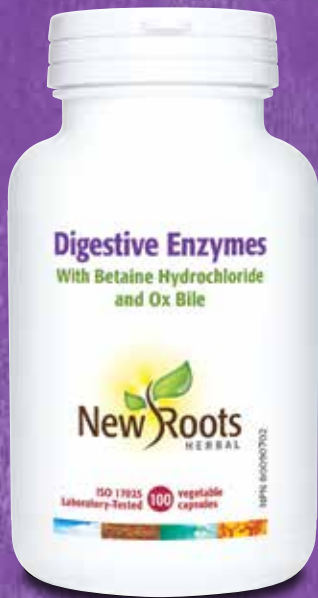
Taking Care of Your Heart Naturally

1. Balanced Diet

A heart-healthy diet is foundational. It should include a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats like omega-3 fatty acids found in fish. Reducing the intake of saturated fats, *trans* fats, and cholesterol can significantly lower the risk of heart disease. The Mediterranean diet, known for its heart benefits, and the Portfolio diet, beneficial for managing high blood pressure, both emphasize these nutritious foods.



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Mediterranean-Diet Basics

- Consume a lot of vegetables and fruits in a variety of colours and types each day.
- Have red meat only occasionally and in small portions.
- Use whole-grain bread, pasta, rice, and other grains over refined ones.
- Choose olive oil as the primary fat source, and enjoy nuts and seeds.
- Include cheese and yogurt in moderation, opting for low-fat when possible.
- Focus on fish and seafood twice a week, and enjoy poultry, eggs, and legumes regularly.
- Use herbs and spices instead of salt for flavour.
- Enjoy one glass of red wine per day with meals.

Portfolio-Diet Basics

- Include soy products, beans, and other legumes for protein.
- Aim for a handful each day of nuts and seed, such as almonds, walnuts, and chia.
- Focus on high-fibre foods like oats, barley, and other whole grains, along with fruits and vegetables.
- Use foods fortified with plant sterols, like certain margarine spreads or yogurts.
- Choose unsaturated fats from sources like olive oil and avocado.
- Reduce intake of sweets, sugary beverages, and processed snacks.

2. Regular Exercise

Engaging in regular physical activity strengthens the heart muscle, improves blood circulation, and helps in maintaining a healthy weight. Activities like brisk walking, swimming, or cycling for at least 150 minutes a week are recommended.

3. Stress Management

Chronic stress can negatively impact heart health. Practices such as meditation, yoga, and deep breathing exercises can help manage stress effectively and improve vagus-nerve function, part of the parasympathetic nervous system. A therapeutic approach called “heart math” integrates the autonomic nervous system (ANS) connection of the heart and mind,

contributing to improve heart-rate variability. Poor heart-rate variability is linked to a higher risk of developing chronic diseases such as heart disease, anxiety, stroke, and other health disorders.

4. Avoiding Harmful Habits

Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption have detrimental effects on heart health and can increase the risk of clotting. Quitting smoking and limiting alcohol intake are crucial steps in protecting your heart. Smoking narrows the blood vessels, making it more difficult for blood to be pumped to the organs, and alcohol in excess amounts raises blood pressure.

5. Regular Health Check-ups

Regular monitoring of blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and heart health can help identify potential issues early. With timely lifestyle and dietary adjustments based on these results, you can better support cardiac fitness and reduce risks associated with hypertension and high cholesterol.

6. Adequate Sleep

Quality sleep is essential for heart health. Poor sleep patterns have been linked to higher risks of heart disease and stroke. Sleep apnea also has been linked to increased cardiac problems.

7. Supplements

Research has shown that omega-3, coenzyme Q₁₀, D-ribose, vitamin D, and magnesium may support heart function, along with a healthy diet, stress reduction, and exercise.

The Heart and Longevity

The health of your heart is intrinsically tied to your overall longevity and quality of life. A well-cared-for heart can reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases, which are among the leading causes of death worldwide. By adopting a lifestyle that supports heart health, you not only improve your lifespan but also enhance the quality of your daily life.

The heart, an organ of incredible complexity and resilience, deserves our utmost care and attention. By understanding its anatomy and functions, and by adopting a heart-healthy lifestyle, we can ensure that this vital organ continues to sustain and nurture our lives. Remember: A healthy heart is not just about avoiding illness; it is about embracing a lifestyle that allows you to live fully and vibrantly.



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As Seasons Change, Should Our Supplements?

by Angelica Mastrodicasa, HBSc, ND

Now that we have transitioned from sunglasses and swim trunks to sweaters and parkas, it is important that we also consider what changes need to be made to our health as the seasons change. Many of us suffer from dry skin, weight gain, low mood, and sleep disturbances during winter. Not to mention the infamous wave (sometimes *waves*) of cold and flu that we can never seem to avoid. So, whether it be a medicine-cabinet cleanout or a new purchase from the health-food store, it is safe to say that we all need to spruce up our current protocol.

Bracing Immune Support

After all the leaves have fallen and our noses start running, it is time to show our immune system a little extra TLC.

For reference, the immune system is a complex network consisting of specialized blood cells, vessels, and organs that work together to

defend the body against harmful invaders. When the immune system is compromised, not only are we more prone to getting sick, but symptoms are usually more intense and the duration of illness is much longer.

The maintenance of a healthy immune system can be impacted by the vitamins and minerals in our diet. Alongside brewing a big pot of bone broth, it is probably a good time to stock up on some nutraceuticals including vitamins D and C, zinc, and echinacea this upcoming season. Between 70 and 97% of Canadians have low vitamin D levels, which have been associated with an increased susceptibility of infection. Supplementing with vitamin C has also been shown to reduce the severity of the common cold, and zinc has been shown to decrease the duration of colds by around 33%. Echinacea, a traditional herbal remedy, is also a great preventative treatment to ensure that you are not getting sick in the first place.

Bye-Bye Winter Blues

As the sun sets earlier and the days are cold, some of us may notice a shift in our mood. Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that occurs seasonally and can involve an array of symptoms including sadness, oversleeping, overeating, and social withdrawal. Studies suggest that people with winter-pattern SAD may have reduced levels of serotonin due to shorter daylight hours, vitamin D deficiency, and increased melatonin release. So, how can we best prepare for this? A light-therapy machine or a light box that offers 10,000 lux is a great place to start if you struggle a lot with SAD. Exposing yourself to the light box for 30 minutes per day, or getting 10–15 minutes of natural sunlight in the morning, is crucial for improving mood and melatonin production. In addition, testing and supplementing for vitamin D levels during colder months can help curb some feelings of low mood alongside light therapy.



Cold Weather, Shifting Sleep

Whether we “spring forward” or “fall back,” it seems as though daylight saving time never fails to disrupt our sleeping patterns. Light exposure throughout the day plays such an important role in what we refer to as our circadian rhythm, i.e. our body’s internal clock. It helps signal when we should be awake and alert and when it is time to rest, but it also has a big effect on mood and energy levels. As the days get shorter and the nights get longer, some of us may need the support of melatonin supplementation to help adjust to changes in light exposure. Taking anywhere between 0.5 and 5 mg of melatonin about an hour before bed can help reinforce a healthy sleep-wake cycle during the winter months. Those in need of an energy boost may also consider supplementing with B vitamins, which can help support red blood-cell formation and the conversion of carbohydrates, fats, and proteins into usable energy.

Dry Skin SOS

When the humidity drops and the temperature outside is glacial, it is time to pay special attention to our skin. Following the same skincare routine year-round may not be sufficient, especially if you suffer from dry, itchy, cracked, or eczematous skin during the colder months. In order to prevent this, it is important to invest in fragrance-free, hydrating ointments and emollients containing ingredients such as jojoba oil, lanolin, shea butter, and hyaluronic acid. Hydrating the skin may also involve purchasing a humidifier, swapping from hot to warm showers, and steering clear of

any products that will strip away the skin’s natural oils. Another great addition is an omega-3 fish oil, which can help decrease inflammation in the skin, support the skin’s lipid barrier, and reduce any redness or itchiness that may result from dry, cold weather.



Ultimately, it is important that we recognize the ways in which our bodies shift seasonally. Like other mammals, humans tend to eat a little more and sleep a little longer in the winter months, which can be completely normal, though some shifts in mood and wellbeing can signal to ourselves and others that it is time for some extra support. This can include increasing your vitamin D levels, purchasing a humidifier, slathering on some shea butter, or adding in an omega-3 fish oil. Nevertheless, by acknowledging and responding to these changes in season, we can better support our overall health while getting back to the things we love and enjoy in life.



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Dr. Mastrodicasa obtained her Doctor of Naturopathy degree from CCNM where she continues to work as a teaching assistant between seeing patients in private practice. She is passionate about preventative medicine and provides care to individuals seeking to reclaim their health.

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Stress:

A Ticking Time Bomb?

by Annick Moffatt, ND



Chronic stress affects at least one in five people, particularly those aged 35 to 49, who often report feeling moderately to extremely stressed daily. Certain professions, like those in health care and social assistance, are particularly stress-prone, with over one-quarter of employees experiencing high work-related stress. Factors such as heavy workloads, balancing responsibilities, and the emotional toll of “doing it all” contribute significantly to this issue. Understanding the profound impact of chronic stress on health requires an exploration of its definition, the body’s response, and the negative outcomes associated with prolonged exposure.

Your Body’s Alarm System

Stress functions as an internal alarm triggered by pressures from daily life including work, relationships, and unexpected challenges. While a small amount of acute stress can enhance focus and performance, excessive stress can drain energy and erode wellbeing, leading to various physical and mental health issues. It is crucial to recognize that stress is not only determined by external factors but also by individual perceptions and responses. For example, two people facing a new job may react differently: One may feel overwhelmed while the other views it as an exciting opportunity. This mindset plays a significant role in how stress affects individuals.

What Is Stress Response?

The stress response is a complex system that prepares the body for immediate threats. Here is how it works.

- 1. Perception of Threat:** The brain detects a danger (whether real or perceived), signalling the body to prepare for action.
- 2. Activation of the HPA Axis:** The hypothalamus releases a hormone (corticotropin-releasing hormone or CRH), prompting the pituitary gland

to release another hormone (adrenocorticotrophic hormone or ACTH), which instructs the adrenal glands to produce cortisol and adrenaline.

3. Fight-or-Flight Response: Adrenaline and cortisol prepare the body to confront or escape danger, leading to increased heart rate, rapid breathing, and muscle tension. The liver also converts stored glycogen into glucose for quick energy, while nonessential processes like digestion slow down.

The Role of Adrenaline

Adrenaline is crucial during the acute phase of the fight-or-flight response, enhancing the body’s ability to react quickly by:

- increasing heart rate and pumping blood efficiently;
- dilating airways for better oxygen intake;
- mobilizing energy by breaking down glycogen; and
- heightening alertness to improve awareness of surroundings.

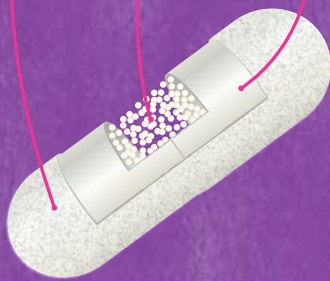


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Physical Impact of Chronic Stress

Chronic stress results in the constant release of cortisol which, while necessary for energy regulation, can keep the body in a prolonged state of alertness, leading to various adverse effects on health including:

- **Digestive System:** Slowed digestion can result in gastrointestinal issues like indigestion, acid reflux, and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).
- **Blood Sugar Levels:** Frequent spikes in blood sugar increase the risk of insulin resistance and diabetes.
- **Immune System:** Chronic stress suppresses immune function, making the body more vulnerable to infections.
- **Cardiovascular Health:** Continuous release of stress hormones raises blood pressure and heart rate, potentially leading to hypertension and heart disease.
- **Bone Health:** Elevated cortisol reduces bone density by suppressing the activity of bone-building cells and increasing bone breakdown, raising the risk of osteoporosis.
- **Thyroid Health:** High cortisol levels disrupt thyroid-hormone production, slowing metabolism and leading to symptoms such as weight gain and fatigue, which may result in hypothyroidism if untreated.

Psychological and Emotional Effects

Chronic stress affects mental health, contributing to anxiety, depression, and cognitive decline. Elevated cortisol levels can impair memory and emotional regulation, affecting areas of the brain responsible for these functions.



Practical Tips on How to Manage Chronic Stress

- **Rationalize Control:** Identify what you can control versus what you cannot to empower yourself and take actionable steps.
- **Reframe the Situation:** View challenges as opportunities to shift your perception of stress positively.



- **Positive Thinking:** Replace negative thoughts with positive affirmations to foster a calm state of mind.
- **Practice Mindfulness:** Engage in deep breathing, meditation, or progressive muscle relaxation to activate the relaxation response.
- **Maintain Physical Activity:** Regular exercise helps metabolize stress hormones and boosts mood-enhancing endorphins.
- **Seek Social Support:** Engage with friends or family to share perspectives and alleviate stress.
- **Get Enough Rest:** Prioritize sleep for mental clarity and to help reset the body's systems.
- **Nutrient-Dense Foods:** Consume healthy fats and low-sugar foods, such as avocados and fatty fish, to support brain health and mood regulation.
- **Support with Supplements:** Consider a stress-support formula containing B vitamins, L-tyrosine, ashwagandha, and holy basil, alongside omega-3 fatty acids, magnesium, and vitamin D for overall mental wellbeing.

Chronic stress affects physical and mental wellbeing, leading to various health issues. While acute stress can be beneficial, prolonged stress has detrimental effects that can erode quality of life. By actively managing stress through mindfulness, exercise, and support, individuals can mitigate its impact. Recognizing stress as a signal from the body encourages necessary changes to protect both physical and mental health. When faced with stress, take a moment to assess, breathe, and adjust to safeguard against long-term effects.



Annick Moffatt, ND

With more than 20 years of experience in the health domain, first in psychology, then as a naturopathic doctor, she brings a holistic approach to health problems.

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Radiant Skin from *Within*

by Dasha Leneva, ND

Aging is inevitable, and when it comes to skin aging—think fine lines, sagging, and wrinkles—we often strive to escape the toll that time takes on our skin. However, it sometimes feels like we are running in place and not making any real progress. Why do the topical products we use only take us so far? The answer lies in understanding that achieving radiant skin involves more than just what you apply to it: It requires internal wellness—a glow from the inside out.

The Science of Aging

Before we dive into the connection between internal wellness and healthy skin, it is essential to understand the science of aging. There are two categories of aging.

Intrinsic Aging

This natural aging process occurs over time, typically beginning in our mid-20s. Our skin's ability to regenerate new cells slows down, leading to thinner skin and a duller complexion due to reduced rates of cell turnover. We also lose collagen (which provides our skin with its structure and elasticity) and elastin (which gives our skin its firmness). The loss of both contributes to the appearance of wrinkles and sagging. Our skin also begins to produce less oil and experiences reduced circulation, leading to dryness and an uneven tone.

Extrinsic Aging

This type of aging is caused by external factors and environmental exposures, which can accelerate the natural aging process and lead to premature aging. Factors such as ultraviolet (UV) light exposure from the sun, smoking, pollution, excessive alcohol consumption, and poor nutrition can cause oxidative stress, dehydration, and premature loss of collagen and elastin.

As daunting as it sounds, aging is entirely normal! Wrinkles are only perceived as a problem because society has made them so. Aging can be beautiful; our skin tells a story. For example, smile lines (what some call “crow’s feet”) are memories of laughs and smiles shared, and our skin is a testament to a life well-lived. However, it is important to take good care of our skin, and with a little care from the inside out, we can approach aging with grace.

To combat aging, adopting lifestyle changes and practicing sun protection are key. This can be achieved with sunscreen or sun avoidance, and by avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol consumption, managing stress, and ensuring adequate sleep.

Diet and hydration also play crucial roles in skin health. A diet rich in antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals supports skin health. We can also support our skin with supplements and topicals as well. Incorporating nutrients that aid in skin health and adopting a holistic approach can help maintain a youthful appearance.



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The Role of Nutrition in Skin Health

What we eat can significantly affect the health of our skin. Diets high in antioxidants, healthy fats; protein; fibre; and micronutrients such as zinc and vitamins A, C, and E are very supportive for our skin. Conversely, diets high in sugar and processed foods can lead to glycation, where sugar molecules attach to proteins, damaging collagen and elastin.

Consuming a diet rich in foods like wild-caught salmon, walnuts, flaxseed, vegetables (leafy greens, broccoli, zucchini, sweet potatoes), berries (strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, and raspberries), whole grains, and probiotics (yogurt, sauerkraut, and other fermented foods) can set you up for success in maintaining skin health. As a bonus, it will probably make you feel really good!

Key Nutrients for Skin Health

Lipids

Skin requires lipids in order to support and maintain a healthy barrier and skin hydration.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Found in foods like fatty fish, flaxseed oil, walnut and chia oils, and certain species of algae. Omega-3s help reduce inflammation, support healthy cell membranes, and maintain skin hydration. Fish oils high in omega-3 can help reduce inflammation and support healthy skin membranes.

Omega-6 Fatty Acids

Abundant in nonfragrant plant oils like borage oil (rich in *gamma*-linolenic acid [GLA] and linoleic acid [LA]) and passionfruit oil (high in linoleic acid), ingredients which help reduce inflammation and maintain the skin barrier. Evening primrose oil, another source of GLA, can aid in skin moisture and elasticity due to its high content of omega-6 fatty acid, linoleic acid. Low intakes of omega-6 fatty acids have been associated with increased transepidermal water loss (TEWL), which is a sign of a compromised skin barrier.

Regular intake of evening primrose oil with high GLA content has been associated with improved skin elasticity, moisture, firmness, skin texture, and reduced TEWL.

Vitamin E

Vitamin E is an essential antioxidant found in cell membranes, contributing to overall skin health. It also helps shield the skin from UV damage, oxidative stress, and environmental factors like pollution. Evidence suggests that vitamin E levels are depleted when skin is exposed to sunlight, indicating that antioxidants are used up before a sunburn occurs. This supports the idea that supplementing with vitamin E can further decrease sun damage when used alongside regular sunscreen.

The Synergy of Vitamins E and C

Vitamin E's benefits are enhanced when combined with vitamin C. Vitamin C replenishes vitamin E in cell membranes and is responsible for the production of collagen. Additionally, vitamin C is crucial for improving skin-barrier lipids like ceramides, which help maintain the skin's integrity by preventing water loss and supporting the skin's natural moisturizing factor. Together, vitamins E and C work synergistically to reduce UV damage and promote good skin health.

Collagen: Essential for Skin Structure, Wrinkle Reduction, and Elasticity Improvement

Collagen is crucial for maintaining skin structure and elasticity, but its levels naturally decrease with age. This decline contributes to the appearance of wrinkles and reduced skin firmness. However, studies have demonstrated that supplementation with specific collagen peptides (Verisol® [collagen types I and III]) can positively affect skin health, particularly by improving skin elasticity and potentially reducing wrinkles. Additionally, collagen supplementation is believed to enhance skin moisture, with the most significant moisturizing effects observed in individuals over the age of 50.



With all that being said, it is clear that skin aging is much more complex than just wrinkle development. However, even though the aging process is complicated, supporting your skin does not have to be. By combining a balanced diet, a healthy lifestyle, appropriate supplements, and effective topical treatments into your daily routine, you can enhance your skin's appearance and overall wellbeing. Adopting an inside-out approach to skin health can have a profound impact, making you look better and feel better holistically. It is never too late to make these changes, and with consistent effort, you can achieve radiant skin well into your 50s and beyond.



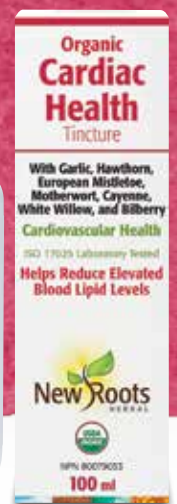
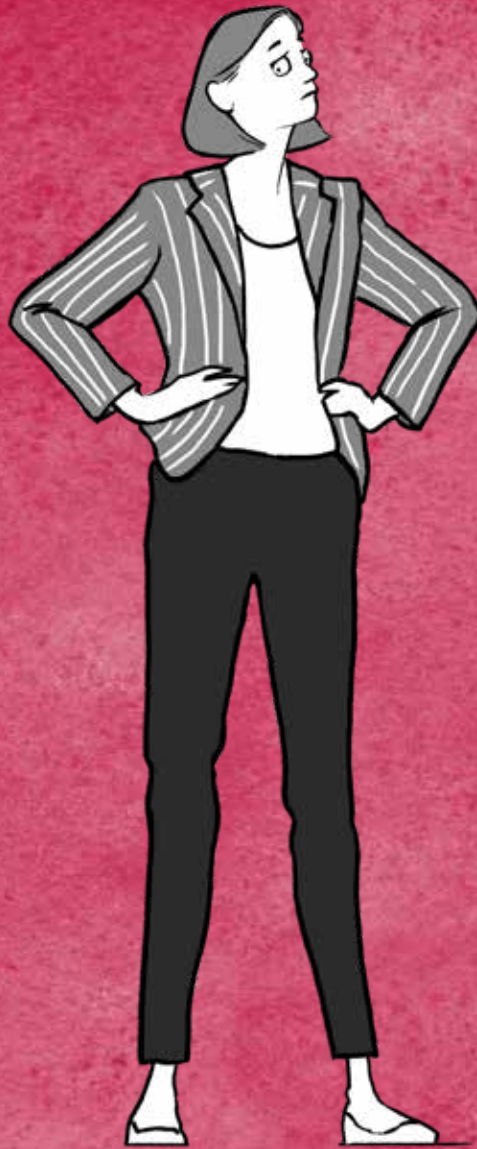
Dr. Dasha Leneva, ND

A naturopathic physician based in British Columbia helping people understand their bodies so they can be more confident about their health, she believes that even small practical habits can make astounding differences in people's lives.

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What Is Leaky Gut?

by Colleen Hartwick, ND



A healthy intestinal tract is made of two layers of cells which are responsible for governing what is absorbed into the bloodstream and lymphatic vessels from the gastrointestinal tract and what is eliminated in a bowel movement. In a healthy intestinal tract, the adjacent cells that form the absorptive lining are connected to one another through structures known as tight junctions. Imagine the lining of your intestines is a quilt where each intestinal cell is represented by a single square in the quilt and each square is stitched together with thread—those stitches are the tight junctions. It is these tight junctions that help ensure that we absorb only what is desired in the intestines (vitamins, minerals, dietary fat, carbohydrates, etc.) while the rest is eliminated as waste.

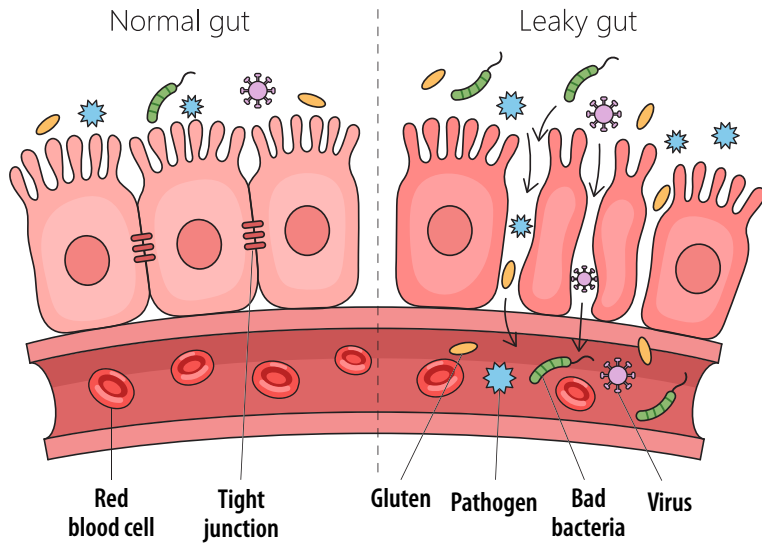
When tight junctions become damaged, the result is the development of gaps between adjacent intestinal cells.

The disruption in the tight junctions is known as intestinal hyperpermeability or, more commonly, leaky gut. The hyperpermeability that characterizes leaky gut creates breaches in the intestinal wall, which may then allow for the absorption of harmful substances like bacteria, toxins, or undigested food particles. Once absorbed, these toxins can reach the bloodstream where they can trigger an inflammatory response which can adversely impact the hormonal, immune, nervous, respiratory, or reproductive systems. The inflammation associated with leaky gut has been associated with intestinal disorders like inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), and liver cirrhosis. Additionally, leaky gut has been related to diseases that outside of the intestines including diabetes mellitus, obesity, heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, depression, and more.

Where Does Leaky Gut Come From?

The integrity of the gut lining and its tight junctions depends heavily on the status of the microbiota (the array of bacteria that reside in the intestines) as well as the layer of mucus that coats and protects the intestinal lining. The interactions between the gut microbiota and the immune system are significant for reducing inflammation and for stabilizing the tight junctions. The mechanisms through which the intestinal microbiota help reduce intestinal permeability are many and include reducing the growth of disease-causing bacteria and the production of short-chain fatty acids like butyrate, which help reduce local inflammation and serve as a fuel source of the intestinal cells. A disruption in the gut microbiota (dysbiosis), for example infection with *Helicobacter pylori*, can result in disruption of tight junctions.

In addition to alterations in the gut microbiota, pharmaceuticals have been associated with the onset of leaky gut. Drugs such as antibiotics as well as



What Can You Do to Address Leaky Gut?

As we have seen, leaky gut can develop for many reasons, and there are various ways to address it. Here are a few key strategies to support the health of your intestinal tight junctions.

Reduce stress, as much as you can. If you cannot eliminate a stressor, develop some tools to help lessen the impact of stress on your body, such as breathing exercises, grounding techniques, meditation, or adopting a creative outlet (journaling, painting, singing).

Adopt a gut-friendly diet that is low in simple sugars and alcohol and that is rich in fibre, plant-based foods, and fermented foods. Plants are rich in compounds known as polyphenols, which are associated with a greater diversity of gut-friendly bacteria. Polyphenols also enhance tight-junction integrity, increase mucus secretion, and decrease intestinal-barrier permeability, thereby generally improving the intestinal defense mechanism. Fibre serves as the preferred food for the beneficial gut bacteria such as *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacteria*. Increasing fibre intake supports a healthy microbiome by promoting the growth of beneficial bacteria. Moreover, as previously mentioned, the intestine's microbiota ferment dietary fibre,

nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), aspirin, or paracetamol damage the mucosal layer of the stomach and intestines. Long-term use of these categories of drugs is associated with an increase in intestinal permeability.

Diet is yet another factor implicated in the development of leaky gut. What we consume plays a major role in influencing the function of the gut and the composition of the microbiota. Several studies have shown that the consumption of simple sugars (fructose, glucose, and sucrose) is implicated in increased intestinal permeability and in dysfunction of the tight junctions. On the other hand, some carbohydrates—namely complex carbohydrates (fibre)—can support the growth of beneficial bacteria and are known to positively affect intestinal permeability. Dietary fibre is broken down by enzymes and fermented by microorganisms, producing short-chain fatty acids like butyrate and propionate, which play key roles in protecting the intestines. Alcohol consumption has been found to degrade the mucous layer in the intestines, which is critical for intestinal-barrier function. As such, alcohol use is another contributor to the development of leaky gut.

Lastly, stress and certain conditions associated with stress—such as intense endurance exercise, depression, and physiological changes during pregnancy—have been linked to increased intestinal permeability. With stress, inflammation levels rise due to the release of chemicals like histamine. In response to stress-induced inflammation, the hormone cortisol is produced to help the body adapt to the stressor. Chronically elevated levels of both cortisol and histamine have been shown to increase in intestinal permeability.

Path to Gut Healing



creating short-chain fatty acids which nourish the cells of the intestinal lining and help reduce inflammation that could otherwise disrupt the integrity of tight junctions.

Consider Supplementation

Antioxidant vitamins including vitamins A and D are important in maintaining tight junctions. In the intestines, in vitro studies show that vitamins A and D improve the tight junctions. Both vitamins are needed for the integrity of the epithelium: They support the gut microbiota and help reduce intestinal inflammation.

L-Glutamine is a crucial amino acid capable of regulating the expression of tight junction proteins. L-Glutamine helps reduce intestinal inflammation, thus allowing the membrane of intestinal cells to remain impermeable.

Zinc carnosine appears to support intestinal barrier function by acting as an antioxidant. A clinical trial of oral zinc carnosine showed that it prevented the rise in gut permeability caused by clinical doses of the NSAID indomethacin.



The disruption of the barrier function of the intestinal tract is an important driver for an array of health conditions including irritable bowel syndrome, obesity, and dementia. As we have reviewed, many reasons contribute to the development of leaky gut. As such, it is crucial to work with a trained medical professional who is experienced with and capable of assessing through appropriate diagnostic testing to determine if leaky gut is a contributor to your current health condition. More importantly, consult with a trained medical professional prior to beginning any supplement regime to address leaky gut to ensure the supplements you are considering are both safe and appropriate for you to use.



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

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A Naturopathic Doctor's Guide to Intermittent Fasting

by Kim Abog, ND

What Is Intermittent Fasting (IF)?

Intermittent fasting (IF) is an eating pattern that alternates between periods of eating and fasting, specifically focusing on the timing of meal intake. Fasting itself is not a new concept: There are various fasting practices done for different religious, cultural, and personal purposes. IF has gained significant popularity recently, mainly for its simplicity and its potential benefits in weight management and overall health. People who partake in IF also report gaining psychological and spiritual health benefits.

IF does not require individuals to dramatically overhaul their current eating patterns nor substitute all their foods for other options. IF is an umbrella term for three different diets: alternate-day fasting (ADF), the 5:2 diet, and time-restricted eating (TRE). ADF involves a 24-hour fast on alternate days. The 5:2 diet is a modified version of ADF wherein there are 5 feast days and

2 nonconsecutive fast days per week. TRE is when fasting occurs every day with variable hours. Usually, there is a 4- to 10-hour window of eating, for example with breakfast in the morning and an early dinner before 3 p.m., which allows for a 14- to 18-hour fasting duration. More modern variations of intermittent fasting involve deviating from the usual daily eating patterns that align with the 24-hour day/night cycle, instead restricting caloric intake to specific timeframes.

How Does IF Work?

During fasting, caloric consumption can range from zero to 25% of daily caloric needs. On nonfasting days, caloric consumption may be liberal, restricted to a dietary composition (e.g. low-carbohydrate, high-protein), or aimed to reach a specific caloric intake (e.g. up to 125% of regular caloric needs).

The exact mechanisms of how IF can improve health markers are unclear. Proposed theories are mostly derived from animal studies and suggest that IF is associated with increased ketosis (wherein your body burns fat for energy instead of glucose), reduction in production of reactive oxidative species (also known as oxidants), and optimizing circadian physiological processes.

What Are the Benefits of IF?

In general, IF principles target weight concerns and other metabolic-disease risk factors (e.g., cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes). IF can impact various mechanisms that help maintain metabolic balance, including those related to our circadian rhythm. The innate circadian rhythm is like our master clock that coordinates all our biological clocks and multiple functions within our body, including digesting and making energy. This can be significantly affected by our daily feed-fast cyclical rhythm (eating or not-eating time). Negative impacts on metabolism (e.g., increased oxidative stress, insulin resistance, and hormonal secretion



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impairments) can be attributed to disruptions in circadian timing and daily food-intake patterns. Studies suggest that intermittent fasting (IF) may reduce systemic inflammation by decreasing energy (caloric) intake and lowering the production of reactive oxidative species by the mitochondria. This, in turn, leads to a reduction in cellular inflammatory processes. IF also seems to improve resistance to stress, regulation of blood-sugar levels, and—more recently discovered—promote autophagy, which helps remove damaged molecules and recycle their material all while conserving energy. IF, regardless of the type implemented—ADF, 5:2 diet, or TRE—produces mild to moderate weight loss (3–8% loss from baseline) over short durations (8–12 weeks).

How Long Should IF Be Done?

Research studies on IF that look at its impact on biomarkers like weight, blood sugar levels, immune function, lipid profiles, and cardiovascular disease risk typically average from 8 weeks to 1 year. Alongside other nutritional strategies, IF is also implemented for a short period of time as a way to optimize performance and maximize training benefits in athletes.

Who Should Consider IF?

IF can be considered as part of a comprehensive health-management plan by those with obesity and weight-management issues; those who have cardiometabolic disorders such as insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease; and those who may be looking to enhance their exercise performance.



Who Shouldn't Be Doing IF?

IF is not for everyone. Because there is some degree of planned caloric restriction involved, IF is generally not recommended for people who are underweight, have a history of eating disorders, or have dementia, to proceed without the careful supervision of a health-care practitioner. Glucose metabolism worsened following an ADF in nonobese women, and ADF in general seems to have a minimal

impact on insulin sensitivity in nonobese people. Additionally, using IF in supporting patients with diabetes poses a risk of hypoglycemia, particularly for those who are taking insulin or insulin secretagogues (e.g., sulfonylureas).

What Are Other Safety Concerns for IF?

Some of the commonly reported adverse side effects with implementing IF include hypoglycemia, dizziness, weakness, polyuria, mood swings, and lethargy. There were also people participating in IF trials who reported binge-eating, bad breath, feeling cold, sleep disturbances, lack of concentration, nausea, and constipation on occasion during the study. It has also been observed that fasting, practiced without adequate protein intake or replacement, can cause muscle wasting. Fasting is also generally not recommended for people with hormonal-dysregulation issues, women who are pregnant and/or lactating, young children, adults of advanced age, and those who are immunocompromised.



How Do I Know if This Is Right for Me and Get Started?

IF is undoubtedly a promising approach to improving one's metabolic health and wellbeing, backed by a growing body of scientific research. However, implementing IF requires planning and commitment and should be approached with careful consideration of your unique circumstances and health status. Seeking professional guidance is invaluable in tailoring a health-management plan for you that safely includes intermittent fasting.



Dr. Kim Abog, ND

Dr. Kim Abog is a registered naturopathic doctor and doula based in Toronto, Ontario. She has a special interest in fertility and reproductive health. She helps people by facilitating health-management plans with them, connecting them to evidence-informed integrative health solutions, and helping them thrive.

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Keeping Active Over the Winter

by Angela Wallace, MSc, RD

Staying active during the winter months can be challenging, especially when cold weather makes some exercise routines feel less appealing. I personally love walking and hiking, and while it's doable in winter, it's not as enjoyable. Do you feel the same way?

Being active doesn't have to mean going for a run, taking a walk, or hitting the gym. I know that many people aren't fans of traditional gym workouts, and not everyone enjoys a structured exercise routine. There are plenty of fun ways to keep moving without sticking to a structured workout. If you're looking for a more flexible approach to staying active, these ideas are perfect for you. Here are 8 creative ways to stay active this winter without them being "traditional" forms of exercise.

1. Walk More in Your Daily Routine

It can be as simple as walking around your house with intention, making time to get up and move your body. You can also park farther away when going to stores or appointments, choose the stairs when they're available, and walk to run errands whenever possible. Small changes like these can add up and keep you active throughout the day.

2. Find Outdoor Snow Activities

You could try activities like snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, or Nordic walking. These give you a great opportunity to explore nature, play in the snow, and stay active. Check if your local community offers clubs or classes that you can join this winter to get started.

3. Try a Dance Class

Dancing is a fun way to get moving. Many dance classes are available for adults, so check out your local community centre or nearby dance studios to find one that interests you.

4. Indoor Sports Leagues

If you enjoy sports or a bit of friendly competition, consider joining an indoor recreational league. Whether it's badminton, volleyball, basketball, futsal (indoor soccer), or pickleball, there are plenty of options to choose from. Invite a family member or friend to join you, and it's a great way to meet new people while staying active.



5. Try Rock Climbing

Indoor rock-climbing gyms are available across Canada and offer a fun and challenging experience, even if you are a beginner. It's a great way to push yourself physically (and mentally) while enjoying a unique and engaging activity.

6. Go Bowling

Bowling is a fun way to stay active and social at the same time. You can join a league or plan a day out with family and friends. It's a great way to keep moving during the winter months.

7. Take Some Time to Stretch

Make it a habit to stretch in the morning and evening to care for your body, especially if you spend a lot of time sitting. You can incorporate your favourite stretches or follow an online video to support your routine and keep your body feeling flexible.

8. Become a Geocacher

Geocaching is an outdoor treasure-hunting activity where participants use GPS devices or their smart phones to locate hidden containers or "caches." You can download the free Geocaching app on your phone and try to find all the hidden cache near you. It's such a fun way to explore the winter landscape while staying active.

Staying active in winter doesn't have to mean structured workouts. By trying fun activities like snow sports, dancing, or even walking more in your daily routine, you can keep moving and enjoy the season. This winter, try to find what you enjoy and make it part of your routine!



Angela Wallace, MSc, RD

A registered dietitian with the College of Dietitians of Ontario, personal trainer, and family-food expert who specializes in women and child nutrition and fitness, she loves helping families get healthy together.

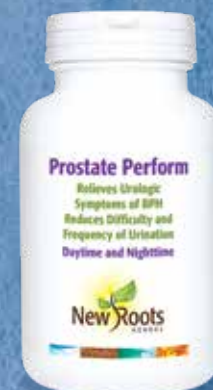
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Low-Carb Diets for Every Lifestyle

Your Guide to Smarter Eating and Better Living

by Dale Drewery

If winter's shorter days, colder temperatures, and holiday feasting have caused you to pack on the pounds, you are not alone. The good news is that spring is the perfect time to get a fresh start on your eating habits.

As coauthor of a book on ketogenic nutrition and a long-time adherent to the lifestyle, I'm a big fan of the many benefits that come from a low-carbohydrate, high-fat (LCHF) diet, including moderated blood-sugar and insulin levels, reduced inflammation, lower blood triglycerides, and higher HDL (the "good" cholesterol), to name just a few.

But perhaps the most visible outcome of a low-carb diet is weight loss. Here's why.

When dietary carbohydrate is reduced, energy must come from the two other classes of macronutrients—proteins and fats. Since excess dietary protein can cause digestive discomfort in some individuals plus an increase in blood-sugar levels (excess protein is converted into glucose),

we turn instead to fats for the fuel we need. This includes the fats we eat but also the fats our bodies have stored in our cells as a result of excess carbohydrate intake.

While LCHF diets have been around for more than a century and used as a therapeutic intervention for decades, the last 20 years have seen an increase in popularity and variety of low-carbohydrate diets options. This begs the question: "What exactly defines low-carb eating?"

In nutrition research, it is defined as less than 40% of daily calories from carbohydrates, which, on a 2,000-calorie-per-day diet, amounts to 800 g of carbs. Some food regimens consider a low-carb diet as having less than 5% of calories, or 100 g, while others are even more restrictive, reducing carbohydrate intake to between 40 and 60 g.

At a glance:

White Rice (1 cup, cooked)	~45 g of carbohydrates
Brown Bread (2 slices)	~30 g of carbohydrates
Banana (1 medium, ~118 g)	~27 g of carbohydrates
Potato (1 medium, boiled, ~150 g)	~26 g of carbohydrates
Oats (1/2 cup, uncooked)	~27 g of carbohydrates

So, Which Low-Carb, High-Fat Diet Is Right for You?

That will depend on your health, the amount of weight you want to lose, and your food preferences, amongst other things. And it's worth mentioning here that if your goal is fat loss and better health, ultraprocessed foods are definitely not on the menu. The following is a quick guide to some of the more popular low-carbohydrate diet options.

Low-Carb Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean Diet focuses on the traditional foods eaten in countries that surround the Mediterranean Sea. It is largely plant-based, replacing saturated fats with unsaturated ones. So rather than cream, butter, and cheese, you'll look to olive oil, fatty fish, avocado, seeds, and nuts as your fat sources. The low-carb version also restricts higher-carbohydrate foods like bread, rice, and pasta.



Low-Carb Paleo Diet

Like the original Paleo Diet, a term coined by University of Colorado's Loren Cordain in his popular 2002 book, the low-carb version of the diet encourages eating foods that your prehistoric ancestors might have enjoyed. Unlike the original, however, the low-carb paleo eschews grains, legumes, and tubers in favour of lean meats, fish, seafood, eggs, seeds, and fruit. If this so-called "caveman diet" feels a bit too meat-centric, you can add more vegetables to the mix. Just be sure to choose ones that are low in carbs, like tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and zucchini.

Atkins Diet

Popularized in the 1970s by American cardiologist Dr. Robert Atkins, the original Atkins Diet was a high-fat, high-protein diet with few restrictions on the amount you could eat of either, so long as you also significantly reduced your carbohydrate consumption. The phased eating plan allowed for 1% of daily calories from carbohydrates, which amounts to 15 to 20 g of carbs per day, for a period of two weeks. This is followed by a gradual reintroduction of additional carbs in the form of nuts, vegetables, and fruit.

Although the initial phase of the diet resulted in significant fat loss, dieters tended to reintroduce too many carbs too fast and quickly regained the weight they had lost. The Modified Atkins Diet, which appeared in 2003, is a more moderate, steady-as-you-go approach to weight loss. It advocates eating 10% of calories from carbohydrates (which amounts to roughly 200 g per day), 30% of calories from protein, and 60% from fat.

The Atkins Diet is still in practice, but has been largely supplanted by the ketogenic diet, which is based on more comprehensive science.

Ketogenic Diet

A well-formulated ketogenic is the gold standard when it comes to clinical and therapeutic applications of the LCHF diet. "Well-formulated" means it contains all the nutrients needed for a balanced diet, while "ketogenic" refers to the production of ketones as a result of the metabolism of fats for energy. The principal ketone (actually a ketone body) is β -hydroxybutyrate (BHB), a sort of superfuel that also acts as a powerful cell-signalling molecule, producing a myriad of beneficial metabolic effects. In addition to the fat and weight loss that results from other LCHF diets, clinical studies have demonstrated the extent to which ketogenic nutrition also addresses the root cause of most chronic diseases including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and Alzheimer's.

Whatever route you choose, be sure to consult with your health-care practitioner before hitting the road. Also, keep in mind that the best diet for you is the one you can stick with.



Dale Drewery

Dale Drewery is co-author of *BioDiet: The Scientifically Proven, Ketogenic Way to Lose Weight and Improve Your Health*. She is an award-winning journalist and writer with a keen interest in science and human health.

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Meal-Augmentation Shake

The green colour of this shake comes from spirulina or chlorella, types of algae which are very nutritious. They are high in antioxidants which help reduce oxidative damage to cells within the body. With today's increasingly stressful and toxic environment, antioxidants play a key role in cellular repair. Spirulina is also high in protein and is a complete source of all essential amino acids, making it beneficial for those who follow a vegan diet.

Ingredients

- ½ an avocado, peeled and pitted
- 1½ cups unsweetened nondairy beverage (coconut, almond, or cashew milk)
- 1 tbsp. coconut oil or butter
- 1 to 1½ tsp. (to taste) unsweetened nut or seed butter
- 1 to 1½ tsp. collagen or vegan protein powder
- 1 to 1½ tsp. (to taste) lemon juice
- 1 tsp. sunflower lecithin powder
- 1 tsp. certified organic spirulina or chlorella
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla or peppermint extract
- ¼ tsp. pure monk fruit extract (or ⅛ tsp. liquid stevia)
- ⅓ tsp. ground ginger
- A pinch of ground turmeric
- A pinch of unrefined pink salt

Optional Boosters (use 1 to 3)

- 1 to 2 tbsp. pumpkin seed protein powder
- 1 tsp. inositol powder
- ½ a banana

Instructions

Place all ingredients, and any boosters, in a high-speed blender and blend until smooth.

Serves 2.



Julie Daniluk, RHN

Julie Daniluk is a highly sought-after anti-inflammatory expert, speaker, and award-winning author of four bestselling books. Her passion is to speak in venues where she blends her skills and experience in fun and positive ways to provide breakthrough results with her audiences.

JulieDaniluk.com



More delicious recipes are available in Julie's recipe book: *Becoming Sugar Free*



Protein-Plus Muffins

These savoury egg muffins are simple, nutritious, and perfect for meal prepping. By incorporating beef bone broth powder, you not only enhance their flavour but also boost their nutritional value. Beef bone broth is rich in collagen and amino acids, which support joint, gut, and skin health. Each muffin gains an additional 2–2.5 g of protein per serving, making them a more satisfying and wholesome choice.

Ingredients

- 6 large eggs, whisked
- ½ cup spinach (fresh), sautéed (start with 1–2 cups raw, as it will reduce significantly when cooked)
- ½ cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- 3 tbsp. New Roots Herbal's Beef Bone Broth Powder
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ¼ tsp. sea salt
- Dash of pepper or garlic powder for extra flavour (optional)

Instructions

Preheat your oven to 190 °C (375 °F). Grease a 12-cup muffin tin or line it with silicone liners.

Heat a small skillet over medium heat. Add a touch of oil or butter (if needed) and sauté the spinach until wilted. Let it cool slightly and squeeze out any excess moisture.

In a large mixing bowl, whisk the eggs until smooth. Stir in the sea salt, beef bone broth powder, and optional seasonings. Fold in the sautéed spinach and shredded cheddar cheese.

Divide the mixture evenly among the muffin cups. Each cup should be about ¾ full.

Bake in the preheated oven for 18–20 minutes, or until the egg muffins are puffed and set in the centre.

Let the muffins cool for a few minutes before removing them from the tin. Store leftovers in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Makes 10–12 egg muffins.



Angela Wallace, MSc, RD

A registered dietitian with the College of Dietitians of Ontario, personal trainer, and family-food expert who specializes in women and child nutrition and fitness, she loves helping families get healthy together.

eatrightfeelright.ca

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Lion's Mane Alfredo

This dairy-free take on Alfredo sauce pairs well with grilled meat or portobellos.

Roasting Ingredients

- 4 cups cauliflower (approximately one medium-sized head)
- 6 cloves garlic (leave skin on for roasting)
- 1 tbsp. New Roots Herbal's Heart Smart Olive Oil

Seasoning Ingredients

- 1 cup unsweetened almond or oat milk
- 2 tbsp. New Roots Herbal's Lion's Mane Powder
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- ¼ cup nutritional yeast
- ½ tsp. onion powder
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. sea salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground pepper

Pasta Ingredient

- 340 g (12 oz.) pasta cooked al dente (spinach or sundried-tomato pasta tastes and presents well)

Instructions

Trim cauliflower into florets, drizzle cauliflower and garlic with olive oil, and roast at 230 °C (450 °F) for about 25 minutes until golden brown.

While roasting ingredients are in the oven, simmer and stir the seasoning ingredients in a large pan.

Once roasted, pinch garlic from skin and pulse in blender with cauliflower until smooth. Add mixture to pan and stir until uniform. Add more almond/oat milk if necessary for creamier consistency.

Toss with pasta. Season with chili flakes or hot oil.

Bon appétit!

Flourish Original Recipe

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AskGord



Since my mother started living on her own, I've been concerned about her nutrition. Now that she doesn't make meals for the family, she often settles for a bowl of cereal or a quick salad for dinner, rather than a complete meal. I'm worried she's not getting enough protein.

Good on you for noticing. Protein is essential, especially as we age, because we begin to lose muscle mass. This loss impacts strength and balance, and it increases the risk of fragility fractures. According to the Harvard School of Public Health, protein requirements range from about 50 g per day for a 65 kg (140 lb) person to 70 g for a 90 kg (200 lb) individual. A 5-ounce can of tuna, a 4-ounce steak, or a salmon fillet each provide approximately 25 g of protein. In comparison, an egg or ¼ cup of almonds (around 24) offers about 7 g of protein each.

If you feel she is falling short, as little as three tablespoons of beef bone broth powder per day can add 25 g of high-quality protein to her diet. It can be added to just about anything: a smoothie, hot chocolate, or savoury bouillon, for example.

We do all we can to keep our immune system strong over the winter months, but sometimes we still catch a cold or flu bug. Lately, these also seem to last longer than usual. Any ideas to improve recovery time?

There is a new botanical on the block, which you can find at your local natural health-food store: It's a nutraceutical extract sourced from the root of the African geranium (*Pelargonium sidoides*). It's a mouthful, so companies may sell it under a different name. To ensure you get the purest and strongest one, check the ingredient panel on the side for PelaForce™. It's been clinically proven to help reduce the severity of many symptoms from cough, runny nose, sore throat, and mucus buildup associated with common colds, as well as laryngitis and bronchitis. And since it's indicated for adults and children 6 years old and up, the entire family can benefit.

Upper respiratory tract infections do tend to linger, so relieving symptoms and speeding up recovery time will get everyone back to health and feeling great.

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

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

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