



“We shall, by and by, want a world of hemp more for our own consumption.”

~ John Adams

WELCOME TO A NEW WORLD IN HEALTH CARE.

Its fall! The spooky season has started, the weather is getting colder and leaves are starting to turn on all the trees. Now is the best time to get outside and enjoy the weather before it gets too cold out.

This month we have some great tips on choosing the right supplements for you and how to add some natural herbal treatments to help you feel your best.



Supplement Secrets

Tricks for Getting the Most Out of Vitamins and Other Supplements

Take vitamins with food. Popping your multivitamin any old time is about as effective as trying to put out a fire with a watering can. If your body can't absorb the vitamins and minerals in that horse-size pill, it's not doing you any good. To maximize absorption, take all vitamins and minerals with food. Don't take supplements with coffee. If you're used to popping a handful of vitamins and minerals with your morning coffee, you could be missing out on important benefits. It seems caffeine interferes with your body's ability to absorb calcium, manganese, zinc and copper, as well as vitamins C, A and B. Wait an hour before consuming anything with caffeine after taking your supplements.

Take children's vitamins if you have a swallowing problem. Gummi vitamins for children are a godsend for older adults and anyone else who has problems swallowing vitamins, or may experience stomach irritation from a single large dose of several supplements. Instead, take two children's vitamins in the morning and two at night. Try the gummi vitamins—they're delish!

Be sure to take vitamin D. Also called the sunshine vitamin, it can protect against colon cancer, help maintain strong bone, reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes and multiple sclerosis, and improve immunity and brain function, among other benefits, according to research. Yet studies also find many people, particularly those in northern climates, don't get



enough of this vital vitamin because the sun is our primary source. In fact, findings showing significant vitamin D deficiencies in certain populations led the Institute of Medicine in 2005 to recommend higher daily intakes of this supplement. Dark-skinned individuals, elderly people, and those who don't get enough sunlight (most of us in the winter months) should get an extra 1,000 IU per day from food or supplements. You can get that with three cups of vitamin-D fortified milk, one cup of vitamin D-fortified orange juice, and 600 IU of vitamin D supplements. The rest of us should aim for at least 600 IU a day.

Check your calcium source. Drug company marketers don't exactly ballyhoo this on the packaging of their supplements, but the human body is better at absorbing one common form of calcium than another. Favor sources of calcium citrate, instead of the other variety, calcium carbonate, which is often found in antacids such as Tums. Calcium citrate is absorbed two and a half times more easily. If you choose this form, however, double your dose. Calcium citrate contains less elemental calcium (the stuff that matters) than calcium carbonate.

4 Must-Have Healing Herbs

- 1** Aloe gel or lavender essential oil for burns. Spread the aloe directly onto the burn. Mix ten drops of the essential oil in a tablespoon of a carrier oil such as almond oil and spread over the burn.
- 2** Andrographis to treat and prevent colds and other respiratory infections. Buy a preparation standardized to 30 milligrams of andrographolides per tablet. Take two pills, three times a day for ten days.
- 3** Milk thistle (*Silybum marianum*) or prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia ficus-indica*) to prevent hangovers. Take 175 milligrams of milk thistle standardized extract (such as the brand Legalon) three times a day for three days before you know you'll be drinking a lot. The herb raises levels of detoxifying enzymes in your liver and improves liver function, helping your body process the alcohol more quickly. Meanwhile, the prickly pear cactus (800 milligrams two to five hours before drinking) helps by reducing inflammation. In one study, 64 people who took it before drinking had less nausea, dry mouth, and other hangover symptoms than a control group, and reduced their overall risk of a severe hangover by half.
- 4** Peppermint essential oil. Add ten drops to an ounce of carrier oil such as almond oil and rub into your skin to relieve muscle strain or apply directly to your temples and the base of your skull for tension headache. Sprinkle several drops on a cotton ball and inhale to relieve nausea and add a drop to a cup of water and drink to relieve indigestion.





Stifle gas with enzymes. First, the facts on flatulence: Everyone does it, on average about a pint a day or about 14 discharges a day (it doesn't take much to make the odor). Now, how to stop doing it so much: Take a dose of digestive enzymes, either fruit-based papain and bromelain, which come from papaya and pineapple, or animal-based trypsin and pepsin, with each meal. Many over-the-counter digestive enzymes contain both types. The enzymes will help you better digest your food, leaving less to ferment in your colon and produce the stinky gas that gets you those weird looks in the elevator.

Beware of dangerous metals in supplements. We're so accustomed to assuming that anything sold in a drug or health food store is safe, that it probably never occurred to you that your Ayurvedic health remedies could contain dangerous levels of lead and other heavy metals. But when Boston doctors bought dozens of the remedies at stores throughout the region and tested them, they found 20 percent had significant amounts of lead, mercury, or arsenic, sometimes at very high levels. What to do? Buy your herbs from a trusted herbalist and ask where the remedy originated. Those grown in India, China, and other third-world countries are more likely to contain the contaminants.

Check out a supplement before taking it. Supplements often don't contain the amount of active ingredient—or even any active ingredient—listed on their labels. If you want to check out the quality of your supplement before you plunk down \$25, go to www.consumerlab.com. This independent laboratory tests supplements and provides reports on their ingredients. You'll need a membership for the full report, but even the partial reports provide good information. If the supplement isn't listed, it either wasn't tested or it was tested and found wanting. The site only posts products that passed testing.

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Education Supporter

Food of the Month - Pumpkin and Other Squash

The Halloween jack-o'-lantern and its orange-fleshed relatives, acorn and butternut squash, are harvested when fully mature. These hard-shelled, colourful and delicious vegetables are loaded with fibre and may help to prevent acne, heart disease, macular degeneration and weight gain. Their seeds are also an excellent source of iron, potassium and zinc.

Winter squash are convenient because they can be stored for months in a cool, dark place. Always bake or steam squash; never boil it, because that would destroy its vitamin C and other nutrients.

Squash come with a special bonus: their seeds. When baked, they make a tasty and nutritious snack!



What's In Them

Beta-carotene: Pumpkin and butternut squash supply large amounts of this nourishing pigment, which may help to prevent acne, cancer and macular degeneration. One cup of cooked butternut has 8.5 mg of beta-carotene, or 107 percent of the daily recommended intake. Pumpkin has 7.8 mg, or 98 percent of the recommended intake.

Fibre: Squash contains appreciable amounts of soluble fibre, which helps to lower harmful LDL cholesterol. Insoluble fibre in squash helps to make you feel full and relieves constipation.

Lutein: Pumpkin is a particularly significant source of this carotenoid, which may stave off macular degeneration and possibly help prevent cataracts and colon cancer.

Magnesium: Acorn and butternut squash are good sources of this vital mineral, which can be beneficial if you suffer from allergies, asthma, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, kidney stones or premenstrual syndrome.

Potassium: A diet high in this mineral may help to lower your risk of high blood pressure, kidney stones and strokes. Acorn and butternut squash supply generous amounts of potassium—one cup of cooked acorn squash provides 25 percent of your daily recommended intake.

Thiamin: A serving of acorn squash (one cup cooked) contributes a healthy amount of this necessary brain-boosting B vitamin, which can help to improve memory and mood.

Vitamin B6: Acorn squash supplies an impressive quantity of this essential B vitamin, which is linked to a reduced risk of heart disease and possibly even depression. (One cup cooked has 0.4 mg, or 20 percent of the daily recommended intake.)

Vitamin C: This powerful antioxidant may prevent cataracts and chronic disease. Butternut is the best winter-squash source of vitamin C, with just one cup providing 31 mg.

Caution: Carbs ahead! For all their beneficial nutrients, winter squash are also high in carbohydrates. They're a better choice than other starchy foods, such as white potatoes, but if you're watching your blood sugar, go easy on your portions.

