

Natural Supplements to Balance the Body

This is a very important chapter of the book for me and it is where we recommend natural supplements for people where required. We run hundreds of labs each year and we get to see where people are deficient and where they need the most improvement. They could be low in vitamins and minerals, depleted in the steroidal hormones, have parasites or bacterial infections, liver issues, gut dysbiosis, etc. I just want to preface this next section by saying that I am all for acute care in terms of medications for some people as they can literally save lives. There are a small percentage of people that require medication (s) in order to survive. They could be type 1 diabetics who don't produce insulin or people who use thyroid medication because they don't have a thyroid. Your primary physician's care is important and you should always follow their directive when it is life or death and there are no other alternatives. I have many friends who are medical doctors, surgeons, chiropractors, etc. and we love them dearly as they have spent their entire lives trying to help people. They have beautiful hearts with pure intentions. With that being said, I find that medication is being prescribed far too often especially when the patients issues could be resolved by lifestyle or diet alterations. There are so many alternative approaches to give a patient for chronic care but most conventional models don't allow for this or don't have the expertise in this area. Dr. Mark Hyman talks about this a great deal when he lectures. He is well respected medical doctor who leads the Functional Medicine Division at the Cleveland Medical Clinic.

Hormone Balancing Herbs and Botanicals

Before we list some supplements that may help you with your condition, please be sure to see a qualified practitioner who knows your specific case and has run some labs on you to see where you are out of balance. I never give out supplements or hormones unless I have seen the patient in my office and have run the required labs. Health is not a game and should be looked at with the utmost care. These are simple recommendations that have worked for my patients that have shown these symptoms.

Energy and Stress

This is probably the one area where almost everyone struggles. They have so much stress in their life from finances, children and personal issues to career considerations. I see executives, doctors, teachers, business owners and just about every profession all day long in my office to deal with these chronic concerns. They are sick and tired of feeling sick and tired. Two of the most common herbs for low energy are licorice root and ginseng. Licorice root contains compounds called flavonoids and the herb's key therapeutic benefit is found in glycyrrhizin. I have personally taken licorice root and I noticed an increase in energy almost immediately. It has many beneficial effects on the body but it should be noted that it is not to be taken by individuals who have high blood pressure. Consult your physician or practitioner before taking it. Ginseng is also used to increase energy and it is plant based that comes in a variety of forms (American, Asian, Siberian, etc.). I typically give this to patients who need a boost but cannot tolerate the licorice root.

From a stress perspective, when my clients have high cortisol, we can use Rhodiola and low cortisol equals Licorice Root or ginseng as mentioned above. Rhodiola is known as Rhodiola rosea, (other names include Arctic or Golden Root). It is generally classed as plants and fungi which are also named adaptogens. An adaptogen just means that it helps the body adapt to physical, chemical or environmental stress. Rhodiola rosea relieves stress by balancing the body's stress-response system. The Russians have also used it over the years for strength, endurance and to fight off depression. It is grown in the arctic areas of Europe and Asia.

PMS and Sex Drive

PMS is an issue for both the women and the men. The women experience the physical, physiological and emotional issues while the men just experience the emotional side. I am being a little facetious but it is a serious concern for many people. Chasteberry and Saffron are two excellent herbs at helping women deal with menstrual cycles. Chasteberry is indigenous to the Mediterranean region and it is a fruit that grows on flowering shrubs. You can get it in supplement form or from dried fruits. Saffron is another herb and it is also a very expensive spice. It is produced from the saffron crocus flower. A herbal saffron supplement can help induce menstruation as well as help relieve pain that many females feel with periods. Another benefit is that saffron can also help to reduce chronic uterus bleeding. As always, do not use if you are pregnant and keep out of the reach of children.

Sex Drive is a very important and I see many patients who have lost their sex drive and this is usually due to being stressed and the subsequent depleted hormones that come along with chronic stress. Their libido is very low and they don't even want to be around their partner. This is heartbreaking as intimacy is very important in relationships. Maca is a plant that grows in Peru and Maca root contains many chemicals, including fatty acids and amino acids (protein), natural sugars, potassium, iodine, iron, magnesium, fiber and calcium. It has been shown to increase libido and this is due to the high nutritional content of the root.

Sleep

This is a very loaded word and most people underestimate how important it is as described earlier in the book. You simply can't function optimally without it and it becomes a major problem for people as they age. I must get asked this question five times a day. How can I sleep better? What can I take to help me sleep? The answer from an herb or botanical point of view is Valerian Root or Ashwagandha. Valerian Root is a perennial plant and is native to Europe and Asia. The dried root part is most beneficial and it contains Acetic acid, ascorbic acid, magnesium, calcium, manganese and quercetin. It has been used for over 2000 years in assisting with sleep. Ashwagandha is also very popular in the herbal community and is an adaptogenic herb popular in Ayurvedic medicine. It is plant based and its constituents consist of phenolic compounds, flavonoids, saponins and alkaloids. I recommend you look into these two supplements if you are looking for herbs to assist with sleep.

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