

# Natural Herbal Remedies & Antioxidant Vitamin Wonders

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# **Natural Herbal Remedies & Antioxidant Vitamin Wonders**

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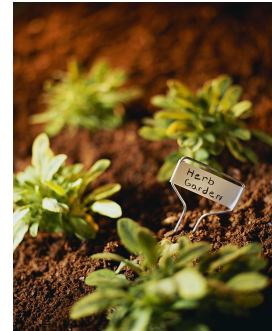
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## Introduction

Vitamins have only been around since about the 1900's. Before that time, foods on hand were the source for meeting vitamin needs.

Some cultures realized, however, that certain foods met specific needs. For example, ancient Egyptians found that eating liver could help cure a person's ability to see at night; i.e. night blindness, which physicians know today is a result of vitamin A deficiency.

So as to leave no stone unturned, this report takes a look at herbal remedies that date back generations before any of our time. And it takes a look at antioxidant vitamins, natural sources of important vitamins and minerals, benefits of supplemental extracts and natural vs. synthetic vitamins for a complete overview of the evolution of vitamins to meet the needs of mankind.



## Herbal Remedies

Herbs have been used for tens of thousands of years to cure all kinds of aches, pains and ailments. Just like people did a long time ago, you can safely treat a wide variety of things with herbs or herbal extracts you can find in your backyard, at health food stores or online. Here is a list of common herbs used to remedy everything from burns to headaches.

### Aloe vera

Aloe Vera is perhaps best known for being an excellent sunburn treatment with superb skin revitalizing properties. Some of its lesser-known uses include aiding the digestive system and maintaining energy levels. It is also commonly taken as a vitamin and mineral supplement because it is chock full of great vitamins that you need. Aloe is typically sold in gel form for use on skin and sunburns and in a drinkable form for use as a dietary supplement.

### Hawthorn berries

Hawthorn berry is well known for the positive effects it has on the circulatory system and heart. This berry is packed with vitamin C and vitamin B and is typically taken over a lengthy period to reap all of the great benefits it has to offer. Most health food stores offer it in liquid and capsule form though the body much more easily absorbs the liquid form.

### Milk thistle

Milk Thistle is a powerful antioxidant that aids the liver and has been proven by many studies to help all liver related problems including alcohol related liver disease. The important compound in milk thistle, silymarin, can be hard for the body to absorb and is most effective when taken in the strongest form available.

### Suma

Suma is also known as a form of ginseng from Brazil and has been used traditionally for a variety of reasons including: fighting fatigue, supporting the immune system and helping to stay stress free. Suma is often consumed as a tea, but is also readily available as a supplemental pill.

### Ginger

Ginger is an excellent remedy for upset stomachs and has long been used as a remedy for pregnant women experiencing morning sickness or nausea. It is also commonly used to treat

inflammation and arthritis pain. Ginger is often consumed as a tea or other beverage to treat nausea. However, it has been used in cuisines around the world as a flavor additive.

### **Black cohosh**

Black cohosh has been the subject of many successful studies proving that it helps menopausal women reduce the severity of their symptoms including reducing the effect of hot flashes. Its healthy chemicals help regulate and balance a woman's hormones so she does not experience the normal intensity of menopausal symptoms. Typically, black cohosh is taken as a supplemental pill that is available at most health food stores.



## **The Antioxidant Vitamins**

Do you know that antioxidant vitamins help to stop certain illness, ranging from heart complaint to cancer? In recent years, scientists have identified several antioxidant vitamins possess an added advantage to help maintain good health. The vitamins most often identified as antioxidants are Vitamins A, C, and E. In addition to prevent the cardiovascular ailments and cancer, these vitamins are crucial to the health of certain tissues and specific body processes. If you want to achieve broad range of protection from these unique vitamins, the antioxidant vitamins should be combined with other important nutrients.

### **Other Benefits of Antioxidant Vitamins**

The antioxidant vitamins protect an individual not only against cancer and cardiac problems, but also against nervous disorders, infections, vision problems and the physical effects of aging.

### **Inclusion of antioxidant vitamins in diet**

It really makes sense to eat a well-balanced diet rich in wide variety of vegetables and fruits, which contain many antioxidant vitamins and nutrients. As antioxidants function in your body as an interacting network, make sure to include the antioxidants that act in the water-soluble areas and fat-soluble areas of the body.

You need to include these important vitamins on a daily basis to assure that your body retains the proper antioxidant reserves for future use. The common plants that contain more antioxidant vitamins and nutrients are soy, citrus fruits, ginkgo leaves, rosemary, Bilberry fruit, Noni fruit and turmeric. The best sources of antioxidants are ginger, pomegranate, sunflower seeds, walnuts, and berries and garlic.

### **The Free Radical Story**

Oxidation is the flame of our life. This process occurs to produce energy by controlled fuel burning within our body. The natural by-products of this process are free radicals. These free radicals cause ageing and other complications. The antioxidants (Vitamins A, C, E) reserve in our body and antioxidant daily inclusion takes care of these free radicals by neutralizing them.

### **Vitamin A**

Nearly everyone has heard of Vitamin A's role in immunity, cancer prevention, and bone growth, health of skin and other body linings and in vision. But the hidden effect of the vitamin A is nothing but the antioxidant property. This is readily available in fortified milk and green, orange and yellow vegetables. They really tend to neutralize the "bad guys", the free radicals.

### **Vitamin C**

As an antioxidant, this vitamin can help keep the eye lens healthy by hindering the destructive processes that tend to destroy it. This vitamin also enhances the body's absorption of iron to prevent anemia. Vitamin C helps in preventing oxidation of water-soluble substances in the body.

In addition to this, vitamin C plays an important role in the release of stress hormones and connective tissue health.

### **Vitamin E**

This prominent antioxidant vitamin is well known for its antioxidant benefits. Vitamin E blocks fat oxidation, especially in the lungs where copious amounts of oxygen is available and also prevents damage to cell membranes and linings. Moreover, this vitamin may protect against Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, age related macular degeneration, cataracts, cancer, and heart disease.

As antioxidant vitamins provide lots of benefits, we cannot include excess of antioxidant vitamins, as it may be dangerous too. The chemical balance of our body may become seriously disrupted when antioxidant vitamins cross the optimal level. Always get the advice of a licensed nutritionist or a health care professional for proper guidance when it comes to the proper dose of any vitamin.

## **Top Ten Natural Sources of Important Vitamins and Minerals**



Vitamins are very easy to find if you know where to look. Meats, grains, fruits and vegetables are all excellent natural sources of vitamins. As an added bonus, your body will typically absorb the vitamins found in foods more easily than those found in supplements. This article will discuss the top ten natural foods that contain important vitamins that your body needs.

### **Oranges**

Oranges are not only jam packed with vitamin C, but they also contain potassium, vitamin B6 and vitamin B12. Vitamin C is commonly know to help prevent and cure the common cold and helps aid in iron absorption but has also been tied to the prevention of heart disease. Vitamin B6 is a powerful tool that aids your metabolism as well as other vital bodily functions.

### **Salmon**

Salmon and other oily fish such as trout, orange roughy or sardines are all rich in vitamin A, D and two important B vitamins. Vitamin A is essential for your immune and reproduction systems.

### **Carrots**

Carrots are heavy on the Vitamin A and also have a good amount of calcium and vitamin C. However, it's important not to overcook them or all of the healthy vitamins and minerals will be cooked right out. Tossing a fresh carrot into your lunch bag is a great way to keep all those great vitamins right where they should be – in the carrot.

### **Spinach**

Folic Acid or B9 is found abundantly in spinach. Folic acid is vital to pregnant women because it can help reduce the risk of birth defects in newborns. Spinach also has some other important nutrients such as vitamin A, C and E and should be eaten raw to get the most benefit from the nutrients it contains.

### **Blueberries**

Blueberries are perhaps best known for their effects on memory. Studies have shown that the vitamin B compounds in blueberries help improve memory and reduce the risk of Alzheimer's and dementia. They are also a great source for vitamin C.

### **Almonds**

Almonds are chock full of calcium and vitamin E. Vitamin E is thought to help prevent certain cancers and cardiovascular diseases. It's also a great source of calcium which helps build strong bones.

### **Broccoli**

Vitamin K, A and C, calcium and fiber are all very abundant in broccoli and a good dose of broccoli once a week will help prevent cancer as well as help build strong bones.

### **Cauliflower**

Cauliflower is hands down the best source for vitamin K, which is vital to your body's ability to make your blood clot. It is also a good source of vitamin C, fiber and some great nutrients that are believed to help prevent certain cancers like breast and prostate cancer.

### **Beans**

Beans are a great source of folate which is great for cell formation. Iron is also found in beans which helps keep your energy up. Other important substances in beans can help prevent cancer, reduce the risk of diabetes, aid your circulatory system and help control your weight.

### **Apples**

An apple a day may just keep the doctor away. Apples are a great source of vitamin C which will help boost your immune system. However, studies have shown that apples also contain other vital properties that help boost your immune system in ways that vitamin C supplements can't.

## **The Benefits of Supplemental Extracts**

Taking supplemental vitamins is nothing like popping a Tylenol for pain or antibiotic for infection. A supplemental vitamin helps maintain your health and ensure that you get the vitamins you need. You may already get enough of certain vitamins which is why you can buy individual supplements of just about anything you can think of. If you are looking to improve your memory, try ginkgo biloba. For healthy skin try lupine extract. This article will explore the benefits of a few different types of supplements on the market today.



### **Pomegranate extract supplements**

As one of the most powerful antioxidant supplements on the market today, pomegranate extract is touted to be not only an antioxidant, but also an anti-cancer and anti-viral substance. One of the most important benefits of taking pomegranate in extract form is that you aren't taking in the extra calories that you would in juice form. This is especially important for diabetics or those who want to take pomegranate long term as a dietary supplement. Many studies also indicate that consistent pomegranate use is linked to a drastic decrease in the risk of prostate cancer.

### **Rosemary extract**

When bought in liquid form, rosemary extract can be a powerful supplemental herb. A couple of drops mixed with beef will hinder carcinogenic compounds from being formed on the BBQ. Rosemary extract can also be rubbed on the skin to help circulation and tighten the skin. There have also been studies that rosemary extract pills may help with prostate health and fighting cancers.

### **Ginkgo biloba extract**

Ginkgo is well known as a memory-enhancing agent and is most commonly found in supplemental pill form. The plant originates from China and has a long history of medical uses. It is also thought to be a mild aphrodisiac, Alzheimer's cure and a great antioxidant.

### **Echinacea**

Echinacea is widely used to help the immune system, as an antibiotic and to purify the blood. It is typically sold in supplemental pill form, but it makes an outstanding herbal tea as well. There are many manufacturers that have an Echinacea tea so it is very easy to find online or in your local supermarket.

### **St. John's Wort**

St. John's Wort is used to fight depression, anxiety and other mental disorders. Over the ages, it has been used for a few other things, but mainly for mental disorders. Recent studies have shown that it may not be as powerful as once thought in combating these illnesses, however, St. John's Wort has many followers, including medical professionals that stand by it's uses.

As you can see, there are a wide variety of uses and benefits of extracts. The even better news is that this is just a very partial list of supplements available. Other powerful extracts include: Bilberry, Boswellia, Cranberry, Elderberry, Eyebright, Goldenseal, Grapeseed, Milk Thistle, Tea Tree Oil, and many, many more.

## **Natural vs. Synthetic: Not all vitamins are the same**

There are literally thousands of vitamins and supplements available for purchase today. Each type of supplement such as calcium, ginkgo biloba or multivitamins has many brands available made in a variety of different ways. Some vitamins are derived directly from natural sources such as oranges, oils, plants and vegetables.

And for each vitamin available naturally, there is a vitamin pill available too. Although the vitamin supplements claim to be the same, you may not be getting the amount of nutrients that you imagine you are getting. It's not to say that synthetic vitamins are inferior to their natural supplements, but it's important you the differences. Another important consideration is the fillers used in vitamin supplement pills. Some brands contain extra substances that you really don't need any may actually cause you more harm than good.



### **Natural vitamin sources**

Natural vitamins sources are those that your body gets from fruits, plants, vegetables, animals and other natural sources. This is typically a very easy way for your body to process and absorb the vitamins you are looking for. However, if you do not eat a well balanced diet, your body may be deprived of certain vitamins. Natural vitamin sources may not be adequate in other instances too. For example, you may have an intestinal problem that prevents you from properly absorbing nutrients. If this is the case you may consider supplementing with a vitamin pill to ensure you get your daily allowance of vitamins.

### **Synthetic vitamin sources**

Although some supplemental are derived from natural sources, not all are. Many vitamins, like vitamin C, can be produced synthetically in a laboratory and have exactly the same structure. However, there are vitamins that are not the same, like vitamin E. Vitamin E has two different forms, one that is absorbed and used by the human body and one that is not. In the laboratory,



chemists typically produce a vitamin E that is half good vitamin D and half not. What this means to you is that often times the vitamin pills you buy at the drugstore only give your body half the amount of vitamin E as indicated on the label.

### **Vitamin fillers**

Vitamin tablets typically contain a variety of fillers and while some of them are just fine for you, you do need to be on the look out for others, or the risk of overdoing them. Soybean oil is a very common filler and very unhealthy filler found most often in gelcaps. Soybean oil can actually do more harm than the good of the vitamin because it is very high in trans fats (these are the bad fats) and can cause all sorts of heart problems as well as obesity. Another unnecessary filler to be on the lookout for is artificial color. Artificial colors have proven to be carcinogenic and many people are allergic to them too.

In conclusion, wonderful herbal remedies that been around since long ago are still available to help people round the world today with many health concerns. And in addition to these great finds, modern science and growers offer a variety of other choices like antioxidant vitamins, natural sources of important vitamins and minerals, extracts, natural or synthetic vitamins to supplement the diet. Here's to good health!





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