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## Vital Herbs for Health and Fitness

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### ABSTRACT

*The healthiest herbs include Cinnamomum, Sage, turmeric, peppermint, basil, Ginger, fenugreek etc., Let us look at the list of herbs that can help you boost your health. The herb's therapeutic properties were traditionally used for treating insect bites and burns, cleaning wounds, and protecting against certain diseases. Humans have used plants for thousands of years to treat ailments, pain, and disease. Components of these medicinal plants—leaves, bark, stems, roots, seeds, and flowers—are used to create herbal remedies. Healing herbs continue to be popular. The versatile herb is common in Ayurvedic medicine (traditional medicine system in India) to boost energy levels, decrease anxiety and stress, and reduce pain and inflammation. Let's have a look at some such herbs which can ease the pain and discomfort*

**Keywords:** *Herbal Remedies, Discomfort, Health, Ayurvedic Treatments.*

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### INTRODUCTION

Before the discovery of Allopathic medicine, Herbs and Spices were used to treat any medical ailment. It has been used since the start of mankind. They were the only source of treatment available for centuries. Whether it be Herbal, Chinese or Ayurvedic Medicine all of these well-known systems used these herbs to treat their patients very effectively. Herbs for Wellness should be a part of your life in order to stay healthy the natural way [1].

A wide range of herbs that work to modulate and correct most health concerns. These herbs are always tailored to the individual and what is going on for them. Natural herbs and supplements are all time and wise-proven to remedy the common discomfort and irritability that occasionally come. When suffering from a health discomfort, (with all due respect to modern medicine), is to always trying and heal naturally first and having these remedies on hand makes it easy [2].

### Herbs with Powerful Health Benefits

The use of herbs and spices has been incredibly important throughout history. Many were celebrated for their medicinal properties, well before culinary use. Modern science has now shown that many of them do indeed carry remarkable health benefits. Here are 10 of the world's healthiest herbs and spices, supported by research [3].

### Holy Basil

Holy Basil Helps Fight Infections and Boosts Immunity. Studies show that holy basil can inhibit the growth of a range of bacteria, yeasts and molds. Bottom Line: Holy basil appears to

improve immune function and inhibit the growth of bacteria, yeasts and molds [4].

### **Sage**

Sage can improve brain function and memory. Sage gets its name from the Latin word *Salvere*, which means “to save.” There is promising evidence that sage extract can improve brain and memory function, especially in individuals with Alzheimer’s disease [5].

### **Cinnamon**

Cinnamon Lowers Blood Sugar Levels and has a Powerful Anti-Diabetic Effect. Cinnamon has numerous health benefits, and is particularly effective at lowering blood sugar levels [6].

### **Peppermint**

Peppermint relieves IBS Pain and Reduce Nausea and also useful for bloating and gas. Peppermint has a long history of use in folk medicine and aromatherapy. As is the case with many herbs, it is the oily component that contains the agents responsible for the health effects. The natural oil in peppermint provides pain relief for those with IBS. It also has potent anti-nausea effects when used in aromatherapy. Similar to ginger, peppermint is also an anti-spasmodic and intestinal relaxant. It’s also good for nausea and vomiting. Peppermint works by allowing food, swallowed air, or built-up gas to pass through the intestines more easily—relieving you of painful bloating and gas faster than if left alone [7].

### **Neem**

Mostly used in India. The leaves from this tree have been used for a long time to treat many conditions. It helps lower your blood sugar and is very good for people with diabetes. This has been proven by many herbalists in their studies. The paste of its leaves is very good for healing wounds. Water boiled in the leaves of neem is very good for dandruff. Neem water helps in irritation, tiredness or redness of the eye. Neem paste makes your acne go away if applied directly. Drinking neem water will also boost your immunity and help in other conditions as well [8].

### **Aloe Vera**

Very easy to grow in your back garden. Aloe Vera leaves contain a gel inside of them. This plant has been used in many skin conditions since ages. Some amazing benefits of this plant are - it can heal burned skin, heal wounds, repairs dead skin on the scalp, promotes hair growth, prevents itchy scalp and reduces dandruff. It acts as a very good skin moisturizer. Very good for eradicating acne. It can ease conditions like eczema and psoriasis [9].

### **Turmeric**

Turmeric Contains Curcumin, a Substance with Powerful Anti-Inflammatory Effects. Turmeric is the spice that gives curry its yellow color. It contains several compounds with medicinal properties, the most important of which is curcumin. Curcumin is a remarkably powerful antioxidant, helping to fight oxidative damage and boosting the body’s own antioxidant enzymes. This is important, because oxidative damage is believed to be one of the key mechanisms behind ageing and many diseases. Curcumin is also strongly anti-inflammatory, to the point where it matches the effectiveness of some anti-inflammatory drugs. Given that long-term, low-level inflammation plays a major role in almost every chronic Western disease, it is not surprising to see that curcumin is linked to a variety of

health benefits. Studies suggest that it can improve brain function, fight Alzheimer's, reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer, and relieve arthritis, to name a few. Curcumin, the active ingredient in the spice turmeric, has major benefits for many aspects of health [10].

### **Ginger**

**Ginger Can Treat Nausea and Has Anti- Inflammatory Properties.** Ginger is a popular spice used in several forms of alternative medicine. This includes nausea caused by morning sickness, chemotherapy and sea sickness. Ginger also appears to have strong anti-inflammatory properties, and can help with pain management. Bottom Line: 1 gram of ginger appears to be an effective treatment for many types of nausea. It is also anti-inflammatory, and can help reduce pain [11].

### **Garlic**

**Garlic Can Combat Sickness and Improve Heart Health.** Throughout ancient history, the main use of garlic was for its medicinal properties. Most of these health effects are due to a compound called allicin, which is also responsible for garlic's distinct smell. Garlic supplementation is well known for combating sickness, including the common cold. Adding more garlic to your diet could be incredibly helpful. There is also convincing evidence for beneficial effects on heart health. For those with high cholesterol, garlic supplementation appears to reduce total and/or LDL cholesterol by about 10-15%. Human studies have also found garlic supplementation to cause significant reductions in blood pressure in people with high blood [12].

### **Fenugreek**

**Fenugreek Improves Blood Sugar Control.** Fenugreek was commonly used in Ayurveda, particularly to enhance libido and masculinity. While its effects on testosterone levels are inconclusive, fenugreek does seem to have beneficial effects on blood sugar. It contains the plant protein 4-hydroxyisoleucine, which can improve the function of the hormone insulin. Many human studies have shown that at least 1 gram of fenugreek extract per day can lower blood sugar levels, particularly in diabetics. Fenugreek has been shown to improve the function of insulin, leading to significant reductions in blood sugar levels. It also supports the optimal production of breast milk. Fenugreek seeds support the optimal production of breast milk, and they are also used to help maintain healthy blood sugar metabolism. The seeds smell faintly of maple syrup, and they are often used in maple-flavored foods. A plant that's indigenous to the Mediterranean, Fenugreek's seeds are nutritious sources of B vitamins, vitamin C and beta carotene. The Latin name (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*) for Fenugreek means Greek hay, as it is frequently used to add nutrition to cattle feed [13].

### **Red Raspberry Leaf**

Useful for preventing menstrual cramps and heavy periods. Red Raspberry leaf is a longtime friend of females and the uterus. It contains an alkaloid called fragrine that relaxes and tones the uterus, causing cramps to hurt less. It also contains tannins which strengthen the uterus, and help to stop any heavy or irregular bleeding [14].

### **Rosemary**

**Rosemary Can Help Prevent Allergies and Nasal Congestion.** The active ingredient in rosemary is called rosmarinic acid. This substance has been shown to suppress allergic responses and nasal congestion. The number of immune cells in nasal mucus also decreased,

with reduced congestion. Rosmarinic acid has anti-inflammatory effects that appear to suppress allergy symptoms and reduce nasal congestion [15].

### **Paeonia**

This herb is one the most versatile herbal medicines for women's health. It is also a regulatory of the HPO axis as it helps to regulate menstrual irregularities. As a spasmolytic it is great to add into an herbal for spasmodic dysmenorrhea. It is a key herb to think about for PCOS, especially in combination with licorice, as this combination helps to reduce androgen excess by up-regulating the conversion of testosterone to oestrogen [16].

### **Dong Quai**

This herb is a primary herb to think about in the treatment of painful periods as it is a uterine tonic, meaning it helps to regulate the contraction and relaxation of the uterine muscle. It also works to reduce inflammatory prostaglandins that are associated with period pain. It is a warming herb that improves blood flow to the uterus [16].

### **Cayenne Pepper**

Cayenne Pepper Contains Capsaicin, Which Helps Reduce Appetite and May Have Anti-Cancer Properties Cayenne pepper is a type of chili pepper used to prepare spicy dishes. The active ingredient in it is called capsaicin, which has been shown to reduce appetite and increase fat burning in many studies. Cayenne pepper is very rich in a substance called capsaicin, which reduces appetite and boosts fat burning. It has also shown anti-cancer potential in animal studies [11,12].

### **Vitex**

Vitex is useful before menstruation or in the luteal phase – including premenstrual syndrome (PMS), acne that is worse before a period, spotting, bloating and tender breasts. It is a wonderful regulator of the hypothalamic pituitary ovarian (HPO) axis which helps to regulate ovulation, correct irregular bleeding and amenorrhoea. Supports female hormone production and balance, especially during the transitions of life. Healthy hormone levels are necessary for physical and emotional wellbeing. Vitex has been used since the time of Hippocrates to support gynecological health, particularly for the changing seasons and cycles of life. It has traditionally been used to support hormone production and balance. This herb's berries promote a healthy mind and body throughout the menstrual cycle and during the transition into menopause. Vitex (*Vitexagnus-castus*) is also called Chaste Tree [15].

### **Shatavari**

“Shatavari” means a woman with one thousand husbands and is traditionally an Ayurvedic herbal medicine. It is a versatile herb used for tonifying and nourishing female reproductive functions. It increases libido (hence the name's meaning), is a tonic to the ovaries, enhances folliculogenesis and ovulation, supports healthy mucus production, can help prevent miscarriages and can also be used post-partum to support healthy lactation. An added benefit is that it is also an adaptogen, which means it aids the body's resilience to stressors. It can be used in young women with menstrual issues, right up to post-menopausal women [13, 14].

### **Black Cohosh**

This herb is primarily used in menopausal women for menopausal symptoms. This is largely due to its oestrogen modulating effects. It is beneficial for hot flushes, night sweats, vaginal dryness, mood issues and arthritic aches and pains. It is also thought to have its effects due to its effect on regulating serotonin in the body, which is involved in mood regulation and temperature regulation in the body. It can be used alongside or when weaning off Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT), under direction of a qualified herbalist. It can also be considered for PCOS and other cycle irregularities in younger women, not just exclusively for pre or post-menopausal women [12].

### **Cranberry**

Useful for preventing frequent UTI's (urinary tract infections). Cranberry changes the way that bacteria "sticks" to your urinary tract, which is a part of what causes a UTI [12].

### **Maca**

Supports a healthy libido and normal fertility. Maca is knobby root vegetable that resembles a turnip, which is a relative of this native Peruvian plant. Maca grows best in the harsh environment of the high Andes, where the Inca warriors used it as a caffeine-free performance enhancer. Maca root (*Lepidium meyenii*) is still used to support healthy energy and stamina, and it is also used to support a healthy libido in women (and men). Recent research has shown that it can support natural fertility by helping to maintain normal reproductive hormone levels. It has a delicious, somewhat nutty taste, and the powdered form of this herb can be added to smoothies, juice or oatmeal [13].

### **Red Clover**

A rich source of naturally occurring phytoestrogens. Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*) has long been used to support women's health. A rich source of naturally occurring phytoestrogens, it encourages healthy detoxification and promotes healthy skin through its support for the body's lymphatic functions. Red Clover is a highly nutritive plant, and it supports the body during menopause. This herb, which is often used as food for grazing livestock, grows from North America across Europe into the Far East; as such, it has a rich history of use in Russian and Chinese herbalism [14].

## **CONCLUSION**

The Healing Herbs listed here are the most effective. There are many, it will be difficult to list them all here. Making these herbs a part of your daily life will help you lead a healthy life. Whatever the situation, people must always take into consideration their constitutional needs regarding diet, lifestyle and rest. As a sister science Ayurveda, offers many wonderful tools for balancing the doshas as well as addressing specific health conditions. It is said that when we restore balance, we are happy in our minds, healthy in our bodies and satisfied in our lives.

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