



3 Amazing Adaptogens For Sleep, Stress, Hormones, & More

Message from Milly

Greetings to all,

After decades of practicing nursing, naturopathy, and bioenergetic medicine, I don't believe in cure-alls.

However, if I were to recommend one category of herbal supplements to nearly all my clients, it would be adaptogens.

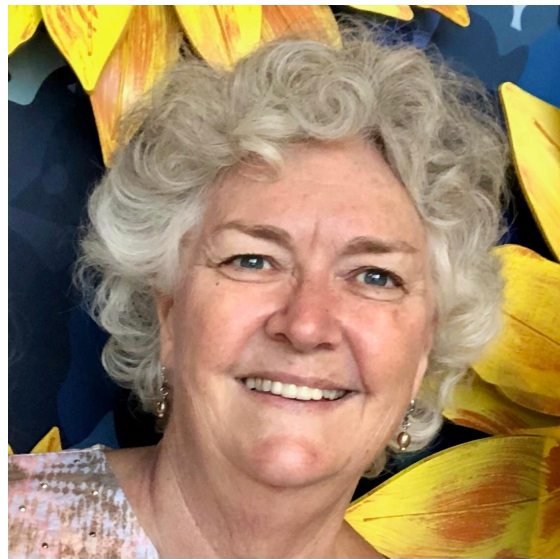
These incredible herbs have been used in traditional medicine practices for centuries and have now been proven helpful for mediating the effects of stress.

Given that stress is one of the world's leading contributors to chronic and deadly diseases (like heart disease, cancer, sleep disorders, autoimmunity, diabetes, and more), I believe everyone can benefit from educating themselves on the benefits of these herbal allies.

In this newsletter, we'll provide a detailed overview of adaptogens, including their definitions, benefits, and the research behind these ancient stress-busters.

Blessings to all,

-Milly





What Are Adaptogens (and how do they work)?

Adaptogens are plants, herbs, or synthetic substances that help the body adapt and function better under physical, mental, and emotional stress.

In this newsletter, we'll discuss herbal adaptogens.

The term adaptogen was coined in 1947 by the Russian scientist Nikolai Lazarev, who defined it as an agent allowing an organism to counteract adverse physical, chemical, or biological stressors by generating non-specific resistance [1].

Ancient healers from many cultures, including China, India, Russia, and America, used native adaptogens liberally to support their people during times of stress, including wars, famines, disease, and even due to the effects of geographical location---such as high altitudes.

Today, adaptogens have become famous for their ability to support energy, stamina, sleep, hormonal function, cognitive function, and more.

We'll share specific examples of adaptogenic plants and the research behind them in the next section.

How Do Adaptogens Work?

Studies have shown adaptogens work by supporting normal stress hormone levels, which are mediated by the hypothalamus pituitary adrenal (HPA) axis.[2]

The HPA axis controls our stress response and is involved in all aspects of endocrine (hormonal) function, which affects the nervous system, gut microbiome, brain, sleep cycle, and more.

Adaptogens have become very

popular in integrative medicine for addressing HPA axis dysfunction (aka adrenal fatigue), stress, anxiety, sleep issues, racing thoughts, stamina, exercise recovery, hormonal balance, and metabolic function.

References

1: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11410073/>

2:

<https://nyaspubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/nyas.13399>

Examples of 3 Adaptogenic Herbs and Their Benefits

Adaptogenic plants exist in nearly every corner of the planet.

The following are three common adaptogens used in Traditional Medicine practices and their benefits.

1: Ashwagandha

This traditional Ayurvedic root, also known as "Indian Ginseng" or "Winter Cherry," has been prized for its adaptogenic and nervine (nervous system support) qualities for over 2000 years.

Ashwagandha is one of the most-studied adaptogens, with research showing its active antioxidant plant compounds, known as withanolides, may support the following:

[1,2,3,4,5,6,7]

- Sleep quality, quantity, latency (time to sleep), and efficiency
- Stress response
- Cortisol levels
- Nervous system function
- Brain function, including focus, attention, executive function, memory, and neurological function
- Blood sugar and metabolic health
- Exercise performance
- Thyroid function

Ashwagandha is easy to find, and I



typically recommend it as a tincture (Energetix Core Ashwagandha) or capsule in a multi-herb blend.

Fun fact: The word "Ashwagandha" means "smell of horse," which is why a tincture or capsule is typically the preferred delivery system!

2. Holy Basil (Tulsi)

Tulsi tea has become a popular beverage because it has incredible adaptogenic, immune, and protective properties.

Tulsi, also known as Holy Basil, "liquid yoga," or "the incomparable one," is one of Ayurveda's most cherished herbs for promoting health, protecting against evil, and for use in religious ceremonies.

Research has shown Tulsi has several adaptogenic qualities, including the ability to [8,9]

- Support sleep
- Reduce stress
- Calm anxiety
- Support adrenal function via the HPA axis
- Improve stamina
- Support the nervous system
- Support immune function
- Promote respiratory function
- I've also found Tulsi tea very helpful during allergy season!

Tulsi is readily available in natural foods stores as a tea, tincture, or capsule.

It's also a lovely medicinal plant to grow in your garden. It thrives in the southern heat, produces the most deliciously fragrant purple blossoms, and attracts many pollinators.

When buying Tulsi tea, look for organic, sustainably sourced brands, like [Organic India](#).

3. Rhodiola Rosea

This rose-scented herb grows high in the mountains of Siberia, where it has been a prized adaptogen in traditional Russian and Asian Medicine for

strength, stamina, and hormonal support for centuries.

Also known as "roseroot," "golden root," or "arctic root," Westerners have caught on to the benefits of *Rhodiola* (also found in the eastern coastal regions of North America), which has been shown effective for supporting:[10,11]

- Cognitive function
- Energy/alleviating fatigue
- Stamina
- Exercise performance
- Stress and its impacts on various biological functions, including hormonal and cardiovascular
- Sleep
- Appetite
- Headaches
- Blood pressure

Rhodiola tastes great as a tincture—like a bouquet of roses—but I mostly recommend it with additional energy and adrenal-supportive B vitamins, such as Energetix Phyto B-Complex.

Other adaptogens include Licorice, Eleuthero, Asian Ginseng, Reishi, Maca, Schisandra, and Cordyceps, but we'll have to cover those in another newsletter!

References:

- 1: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32818573/>
- 2: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23439798/>
- 3: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3252722/>
- 4: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28829155/>
- 5: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8632422/>
- 6: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ptr.6589>
- 7: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/319240118_Efficacy_and_Safety_of_Ashwagandha_Root_Extract_in_Subclinical_Hypothyroid_Patients_A_Double-Blind_Randomized_Placebo-Controlled_Trial
- 8: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36185698/>
- 9: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36185698/>

How To Take Adaptogens

As I said in the introduction, I believe nearly every adult (and sometimes children and teens, too) can benefit



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from taking adaptogens, especially when life gets stressful, you're dealing with chronic illness, or you're going through a time of transition.

There are exceptions, such as for babies, during pregnancy or lactation, and if you're taking certain medications (ask your doctor).

Here are a few general tips on taking adaptogens:

- **Adaptogens adapt to what your body needs when under stress.** If you're tired, they can energize you; if you're wired or anxious, they can calm you. Therefore, it would be very difficult to take them the wrong way as they are naturally *adaptable*.
- **Ashwagandha can be excellent for helping with all aspects of sleep**---from falling asleep to staying asleep and waking up rested. A double dose before bed can do wonders!
- **Ashwagandha is a nightshade**; therefore, it should not be taken if you have a nightshade allergy or sensitivity.
- **Tulsi tea is the ultimate stress-buster.** Many people also use it to help enhance their meditation, yoga, or prayer practices.
- **Tulsi can also be a great energizer** when taken in the morning or as an afternoon pick-me-up.
- **All adaptogens are wonderful nervous system regulators**, either taken alone or in combination with other nervine herbs such as chamomile, passionflower, Bacopa, etc.
- I often recommend **herbal adaptogens to be taken with Energetix Adaptopath for tough cases** of fatigue, emotional distress, or chronic illness.

- **Rhodiola, taken with B vitamins, has been called "a mother's best friend"**. In other words, it's an excellently balanced energizer that supports women on various levels---sleep, hormones, mood, emotional well-being, burnout, etc. [Email Holly](#) if you're interested in trying Energetix Phyto-B Complex with Rhodiola.
- **Adaptogens for sleep should not make you dramatically sleepy** like melatonin would. However, taking a higher dose, say two droppers full or two capsules of Ashwagandha or Tulsi before bed, will make you feel very relaxed, help you drift off quickly, and enjoy better-quality sleep. Some people also benefit from taking a lower dose in the morning (1 dropper or 1 capsule) to support the HPA axis and overall sleep cycle. They can also help with focus and staying calm when taken during the day.
- **Regarding anxiety**, adaptogens can work quite quickly to help calm down your stress response and improve sleep, which can result in less feelings of anxiousness. The effects of Ashwagandha and Tulsi are well-documented for this. If you're on anti-anxiety medication, check with your doctor first.
- **Regarding long-term use**, it is generally very safe to take herbal adaptogens long-term---as traditional people have done for thousands of years. However, once your stress levels decrease, you may not need as much or at all. Some people also find good results from switching up their adaptogens every few months.
- **Regarding children**: Healthy children who grow up in a secure, loving, and supportive environment generally have a

healthy stress response and do not need additional support. However, adaptogens can be very helpful for children struggling with stress, sleep, chronic conditions, grief, focus, attention deficits, and other challenges. This should be determined on an individual basis with a qualified healthcare practitioner. If you're curious, ask about it at your next visit. I do not recommend adaptogens for babies.

- **Adaptogens may not be safe during pregnancy and breastfeeding (mainly because they haven't been studied enough) or if you're taking certain medications, so always check with your doctor.**

If you're interested in ordering adaptogen supplements, like Energetix Core Ashwagandha, Core Licro-Blend, Adaptopath, or Phyto B-Complex, [email Holly at: info@quintessentialhealth.net](mailto:info@quintessentialhealth.net).

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