

MAY 2015

remedies

for
LIFE

pain relief

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Bergamot: A new tool for health

help with
joint pain



page
14



relief help for chronic joint pain

Joint pain can bring us down and keep us there. But staying inactive often makes the underlying problems worse. Increasing physical activity can actually improve symptoms, joint function, and overall mental state, though it might be the last thing we want to do when that bone-crunching ache hits.

Here are some ways to get at this pain so you can get moving again.

Omega 3s: These anti-inflammatory fats found in fish and some plants and algae have a number of health benefits, including help for joints. Jacob Teitelbaum, MD, suggests starting with 2 grams of omega-3 fish oils daily. He also recommends taking gamma linolenic acid (GLA) from borage seed oil.

Vitamins and minerals: Make sure you're getting enough essential vitamins and minerals, including vitamin D and magnesium.

Helpful herbs

- **Boswellia serrata** is beneficial for people with inflammatory conditions including arthritis. This herb combines well with other botanicals for arthritis relief.
- **Curcumin**, an extract of turmeric, can help with arthritis and chronic inflammation. Dr. Teitelbaum recommends combining curcumin with piperine from black pepper for maximum absorption.
- **Devil's claw** (*Harpagophytum procumbens*), an African herb, is as effective for inflammation and pain as the once-touted drug phenylbutazone, which is no longer used to treat people in the US because of harmful side effects.
- **Garcinia mangostana** L. (mango-

steen) appears to inhibit Cox-2, an enzyme that causes pain and inflammation.

- **Willow bark** (*Salix alba*) has been found useful for osteoarthritis pain, and this herbal extract also has anti-inflammatory activity comparable to aspirin—without stomach upset. Dr. Teitelbaum suggests using an extract standardized to 250 milligrams salicin.

Look to fruit

- A powder made from dried apple peels appears to provide significant relief from joint pain. In a study published last year, a dozen healthy adults with chronic pain and a moderate loss of range of motion in their joints took the supplemental powder for 12 weeks. Range of motion improved, and measures of pain and inflammation were reduced.

Dried apple peel is sometimes paired with other ingredients that have been shown to improve joint health, such as chondroitin and eggshell membrane.

- Tart cherries (*Prunus cerasus*) fight free radicals, helping with arthritis and gout. Tart cherry juice has also been shown to reduce muscle pain and inflammation. Studies of runners have found that drinking two 12-ounce servings daily for about one week prior to and on the day of an event significantly reduced muscle pain and improved recovery. ✨ —Jillian Furcillo

"Boswellia serrata: An Overall Assessment of In Vitro, Preclinical, Pharmacokinetic and Clinical Data" by Abdel-Tawab et al., *Clin Pharmacokinetics*, 6/11 • "Cherry Juice Targets Antioxidant Potential and Pain Relief" by K.S. Kuehl, *Med Sport Sci*, 10/12 • "Consumption of Dried Apple Peel Powder Increases Joint Function and Range of Motion" by G.S. Jensen et al., *J Med Food*, 10/1/14 • "Exercise May Make Life Better for Those with Arthritis" by Mary Elizabeth Dallas, www.nlm.nih.gov/MedlinePlus, 10/13 • "Mitigation of Systemic Oxidative Stress by Curcuminoids in Osteoarthritis: Results of a Randomized Controlled Trial" by Y. Panahi et al., *J Diet Suppl*, 2/17/15 • "Pain Free 1-2-3" by Jacob Teitelbaum, MD (\$16.95, McGraw-Hill, 2006) • "Use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine Among Patients with Arthritis" by L.F. Calahan et al., *Prev Chronic Dis*, 4/09 • "Willow Bark" by Steven D. Ehrlich, University of Maryland Medical Center, <http://umm.edu>

lower the risk of birth defects, and that they continue to take folic acid throughout their pregnancies. More big news on this important B vitamin: A Norwegian study published in 2013 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* shows a link between folic acid intake and reduced risk of autism.

The other supplement commonly recommended as a prenatal is iron (27 milligrams per day during pregnancy, and 18 mg/day prior), which has been shown to have a positive effect on birth weight. Like folic acid, you can take an iron supplement either on its own or with other essential nutrients in a prenatal multivitamin. The bottom line: Whether you're trying to conceive or you're already pregnant, consult with your healthcare provider before taking anything.

Adaptogenic herbs

Adaptogens have been shown to promote homeostasis, the body's natural capacity to normalize and "adapt" to physiological disruptions. Think of adaptogens as stress-levelers or balance-restorers. By influencing hormone production, they regulate and bolster the body's response to all kinds of internal and external stressors, and can combat everything from hot flashes

and mood swings to anxiety and depression.

Some adaptogens are valued for their ability to aid energy levels, improve physical performance, and help with weight loss, while others are known for their influence on mental acuity. Most herbs with adaptogenic effects are generally considered safe, but their use during pregnancy or while breastfeeding is generally not advisable—unless, of course, your healthcare practitioner says otherwise. A few adaptogenic herbs that may offer health benefits for women:

Black cohosh: relief for menopausal symptoms, menstrual cramps, irritability, and sleep problems

Chasteberry: relief for hot flashes, vaginal dryness, mood swings, breast tenderness

Ginseng: relief for hot flashes; also an energy-booster

Rhodiola: relief for general fatigue and mild depression ✨

"Clinical Trial of *Rhodiola rosea* L. Extra SHR-5 in the Treatment of Mild to Moderate Depression" by V. Darbinyan et al., *Nord J Psychiatry*, 2007 • "Fitness and Nutrition: How to be Active for Health" 6/08; "Healthy Pregnancy Do's and Don'ts," 5/09, US Dept. of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health • "Getting Pregnant"; "Menopause"; "Women's Health," www.MayoClinic.org • "Healthy Pregnant or Postpartum Women," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 3/11 • "Herbal Treatments for PMS" by Marcelle Pick, OB/GYN, NP, www.WomenToWomen.com • "Premenstrual Syndrome," Medline Plus, www.nlm.nih.gov, 6/14 • "Reflection Paper on the Adaptogenic Concept," European Medicines Agency, 5/08 • "Supplements and Risk of Autism Spectrum Disorders in Children" by P. Suren et al., *JAMA*, 2013

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