

improving digestion in PETS // NIGHTSHADES: healthy or harmful?

better nutrition

THE SHOPPING MAGAZINE FOR NATURAL LIVING

AUGUST 2017 | betternutrition.com

drink up!

THE SURPRISING
BENEFITS OF
ALOE JUICE

BEAT THE
HEAT

simple strategies
to calm
inflammation

MAKING
SENSE OF
SUPPLEMENTS

TIPS FROM
TIERAONA LOW DOG, MD

PART 3
OF OUR
SUMMER
MAKEOVER
SERIES

+

GO
NATURAL
IN 90
sweepstakes

Enter to Win Natural
Products, Gift Cards,
& More, p. 45

9

FOODS THAT
BALANCE
BLOOD
SUGAR



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a striped t-shirt and light shorts, is riding a white bicycle with a large wicker basket on the back. She is smiling and looking towards the right. The background is a bright, sunny outdoor setting with green grass and trees. The overall tone is warm and natural.

**GO
NATURAL
IN 90**

**GO
NATURAL
IN**

**90
days**

As we head into the final weeks of summer, we're wrapping up our three-month-long series with 30 ways to live naturally and boost your health—from simple supplement upgrades to life-changing diet advice. If you missed the first two installments in our June and July issues, visit betternutrition.com.

**WIN BIG
THIS
SUMMER!**

Turn to p. 45 to see all of the healthy goodies we're giving away in partnership with our sponsors—natural products, gift cards, cookbooks, & more!



DAY 1

Veganize Your Eggs

Melissa King, in her book *Easy. Whole. Vegan.* provides three great vegan egg replacements:



Flax egg

1 Tbs. flaxseed meal
3 Tbs. warm water

Whisk together and place in the fridge for 1 minute to thicken.

Chia egg

1 Tbs. chia seeds
¼ cup water

Whisk together and place in the fridge for 1 minute to thicken.

Egg replacer

1½ tsp. Ener-G Egg Replacer
2 Tbs. water

Stir together and let sit at room temperature for 1 minute to thicken.

DAY 2

Enhance Your Supplements

Many supplement formulas tout "superior bioavailability" and/or "activated form" on their labels. But what does this mean?

In most cases, these designations signify that the forms of nutrients used in a product are easier to absorb. Certain nutrients, such as minerals, are notoriously hard for the body to break down and utilize. Certain vitamins and minerals can also be harder to digest with age. Thanks to advances in science, supplements are more bioavailable than ever. Here's a quick cheat sheet to use when reading labels:

	Instead of ...	Try ...
Calcium	Calcium carbonate	Calcium citrate
CoQ10	Ubiquinone	Ubiquinol
Folic acid	Folic acid	Folate (5-MTHF)
Iron	Ferrous fumarate and ferrous sulfate	Iron bisglycinate, ferrous bisglycinate, iron glycinate, or food-based iron
Magnesium	Magnesium oxide	Magnesium citrate, glycinate, or bisglycinate
Vitamin B₆	Pyridoxine HCl	P5P
Vitamin B₁₂	Cobalamin	Methylcobalamin

DAY 3

Halt Headaches

Looking for a natural alternative to aspirin or ibuprofen for headaches? Try a botanical blend. Three standout herbs to look for are hops, ginger, and white willow (aspirin is made from this herb). Ginger, in particular, has been shown in several studies to ease migraine pain and prevent future migraines.

DAY 4

Discover Plant Oils for Heart Health

According to a study in the *British Journal of Nutrition*, a diet rich in alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) helps improve vascular function in overweight individuals by decreasing inflammation and improving endothelial function. In a randomized, double-blind trial published in the journal *Hypertension*, researchers found that patients with peripheral artery disease—a form of atherosclerosis where blood flow to the extremities is impeded—who consumed 30 grams of ALA-rich flaxseed oil daily reduced both their systolic and diastolic blood pressure after six months. Adding a daily dose of flax, hemp, chia, and walnut oils to your meals is a smart way to enjoy the benefits.

DAY 5

GO WILD FOR FLAVORED WATERS

Plant waters are squeezed from leaves and plants or tapped from tree trunks. They are packed with electrolytes that can speed up rehydration after exercise, in addition to age-defying nutrients that may even smooth wrinkles. Here are a few flavorful and fun waters to try:



Artichoke water:

This drink is a mixture of whole artichoke, pandanus leaf, and mint sweetened with blue agave and monk fruit. Using the entire artichoke captures the nutrients, including the antioxidants, silymarin and cynarin, which can help liver detoxification, lower cholesterol, and improve skin texture.

Birch water:

Tapped from the birch tree in early spring, this water is usually flavored with ginger, lime, raspberry, and other natural flavors. It contains xylitol, one of the better-digested

sugar alcohols, which helps prevent tooth decay, as well as vitamin C, iron, calcium, magnesium, and potassium.

Cactus water:

Made from prickly pear concentrate, prickly pear extract, water, and flavoring, cactus water helps boost antioxidant levels and may even help reduce some hangover symptoms, according to preliminary research.

Maple water:

Pure maple water is tapped from North American maple trees in early spring. It reportedly contains 46 nutrients, including some that improve skin

elasticity and fight wrinkles. It is a good source of antioxidants and has more manganese—a mineral that plays a key role in metabolism—than kale, and less than 5 grams of sugar per 8 ounces.

Watermelon water:

High in beta-carotene and potassium, watermelon water packs concentrated nutrition. It is high in antioxidants such as lycopene, which fights signs of aging, and L-arginine, which helps strengthen hair and boost collagen production in skin.

—Sherrie Strausfoglel

Bonus tip!

Get to know the top sources of plant-based omega-3—flaxseeds, perilla seeds, hemp seeds, chia seeds, walnuts, and rice bran oil.





DAY 6 Take a Stand

In the era of sitting being viewed as the new smoking, standing desks are gaining popularity. After all, if you stand at your desk for part of the day, wouldn't that make you healthier? Initial studies are too small and short to provide definite proof, but show promise.

A British study of 10 office workers found that with about 3 hours of standing, blood sugar after meals was 43 percent lower, which could, theoretically, help prevent diabetes. Compared to sitting, standing at a desk burned an extra 0.83 calories per minute, which adds up to an extra 25 calories per 30 minutes. But so far, there's no evidence that the difference will result in weight loss.

Another study, at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, found that standing for up to half of the work day increased well-being and energy, left people feeling more calm and relaxed, and reduced appetite and food intake among 28 office workers. And at Texas A&M Health Science Center School of Public Health, in College Station, standing improved productivity, especially among those who kept standing during part of each day for more than a month.

bonus tip! For reviews of many different brands and models of standing desks, visit workwhilewalking.com.

DAY 7 Check the Expiration Date

Supplements, like food, don't last forever. That's why it's important to look for expiration dates on all supplement labels. High-quality brands will have an expiration date clearly printed somewhere on the bottle. If there is no expiration date, go with another brand. Maximize the shelf life of your supplements by storing them in a cool, dark place away from direct sunlight. Seal bottles tightly after use. And don't toss the silica packet inside the bottle—it helps keep supplements fresher longer.

DAY 8 Lower Cholesterol with Avocados

More over apples! Adding avocado to your daily diet can help improve your cholesterol levels. These were the findings of a study by researchers at Pennsylvania State University. The study, which involved 45 overweight volunteers, found that those eating one avocado each day as part of a heart-healthy diet experienced a drop in LDL cholesterol that was twice that experienced by those eating a low-fat diet.

What's more, a study published in the journal *Food and Function* found that adding half an avocado to a hamburger reduced post-meal inflammation and halted the nearly 23 percent decrease in blood flow found among those eating a plain hamburger sans avocado.



Visit better-nutrition.com for a **Avocado, Sugar Snap Pea, & Blood Orange Salad** recipe.

DAY 9 Get Enough D to Prevent Diabetes

Need yet another reason to take supplemental vitamin D? According to a study in *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, low levels of the sunshine vitamin can boost risk of developing type 2 diabetes even more than being overweight. Aim for a daily dose of around 2,000 IU or spend just 15 minutes in the sun (minus the sunscreen) each day to ensure you're getting all the D you need.

DAY 10 Load Up on Vitamin-C-Rich Camu Camu

Camu camu is a small fruit found deep in the Amazonian rainforest. Technically known as *Myrciaria dubia*, it is one of the most concentrated plant-based sources of vitamin C, according to research in the *Journal of Cardiology*. Camu camu is also a powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant, and may contain many other naturally occurring vitamins, minerals, and amino acids that contribute to its immune-enhancing capabilities. Look for camu camu as a single supplement or as part of a food-based vitamin C formula.

DAY 11 Sharpen Your Mind with This Spice

Curcumin, the main active ingredient in turmeric, is a potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory that inhibits formation of beta-amyloid (plaque found in the brains of those with Alzheimer's), and assists in its removal from the body. Research has demonstrated improvements in memory in Alzheimer's patients taking curcumin. Curcumin is available as a supplement, and it never hurts to use turmeric liberally as a spice—in Indian curries, for example. And consider taking it with vitamin D; according to recent studies, vitamin D and curcumin may work synergistically to clear beta-amyloid.

DAY 12 Get Some Enzyme Action

Vegetarian enzymes are useful to maintain proper digestion. They may also allow the body to produce more of its own metabolic enzymes by reducing the need to make digestive enzymes. These can be taken with meals to aid digestion or between meals to fortify the body as a whole.

bonus tip!

Be aware that the animal-derived enzyme **pancreatin** is only active in an alkaline environment (pH of 8.0 or higher).



DAY 13 Protect Your Eyes

These days, most of us live on our computers, phones, tablets, and other electronic devices. And this leaves us vulnerable to eye fatigue. Luckily, supplements can help boost eye health. Astaxanthin supports retina health and brain function. Carotenoids, particularly lutein and zeaxanthin, are essential for retinal health. Omega fatty acids can help prevent and treat dry eye syndrome. And blueberries help protect vision from retinal damage.

DAY 14 Get Your Blood Flowing

Maintaining a healthy blood flow is crucial for optimal cardiovascular health. The following supplements can support a healthy circulatory system:

CoQ10: This nutrient promotes circulation by inhibiting the formation of blood clots and acting as an antioxidant.

Enzymes: In addition to digestion, enzymes play an important role in circulation. As we age, the body's production of enzymes diminishes, which can impede healthy blood flow. Supplements featuring key enzymes such as protease and nattokinase work by cleansing the blood and reducing inflammation.

Vitamins A, C, & E: According to research published in the journal *Advances in Clinical and Experimental Medicine*, this trio of antioxidant vitamins may promote healthy blood flow by preventing damage caused by oxidized cholesterol and also by relaxing arteries.

DAY 15 Stop Smoking for Digestive Harmony

Think smoking affects only your cardiovascular and respiratory systems? Think again! Smoking contributes to many common disorders of the digestive system, including heartburn, GERD, peptic ulcers, and some liver diseases. Smoking also increases the risk of Crohn's disease.



DAY 16 Detoxify with Aromatherapy

Incorporating aromatherapy into your detox plan lets you tap into the therapeutic cleansing properties of essential oils, banish bloat, and revitalize your body. Here are some suggestions from Georgia-based aromatherapy expert Cheryl Cromer:

A.M. DETOX BLEND	P.M. DETOX BLEND
6 drops peppermint	10 drops fennel
16 drops juniper	18 drops grapefruit
18 drops lemon	10 drops sage

Note: Use an aromatherapy diffuser for best results.

Do This Every Morning for a Great Day: Lemon essential oil has a sunny, uplifting scent that is said to clarify thought, according to Ayurvedic principles. Place a single drop in the middle of your forehead to help you start your day with purpose. It gives a new meaning to the words, "Rise and shine!"

DAY 17 Energize with Ribose

"Ribose is what the energy molecules in our bodies are made from," says Jacob Teitelbaum, MD, author of *The Fatigue and Fibromyalgia Solution*. Our bodies make it from food but may fall short, especially when there is extra demand for energy, such as in athletic events or due to fibromyalgia or heart disease. Ribose is available in chewable tablets, capsules, and powders. The powder has a pleasant, slightly sweet taste and mixes easily in water. Take in the morning for best results.



Visit betternutrition.com for a Stir-Fried Shiitake Mushrooms with Tofu & Bok Choy recipe.

DAY 18 Improve Your Mood

Depression is characterized by a feeling of sadness that does not go away and a loss of interest in life. According to Michael A. Smith, MD, author of *The Supplement Pyramid*, here are the top nutrients for depression:

- ▶ **Vitamin D:** "Low levels of vitamin D have been linked to an increased risk of depression in both younger and older adults," says Smith.
- ▶ **L-tryptophan and 5-HTP:** These are both precursors to serotonin, increasing its production. "Acute tryptophan depletion can cause depression, and several human clinical studies have found that 5-HTP is as effective for depression as standard antidepressant drugs," says Smith. Take either L-tryptophan or 5-HTP.
- ▶ **SAMe:** This nutrient influences the metabolism of neurotransmitters such as serotonin and dopamine, explains Smith. "Several well-controlled human studies have shown that SAMe alleviates symptoms of depression, yielding better results than a placebo or comparable to standard antidepressant drugs."

Bonus tip! In addition to the remedies above, Smith also suggests trying St. John's wort, inositol, and saffron to ease symptoms of depression.

DAY 19 Use Mushrooms for Immune Health & More

Medicinal mushrooms—including maitake, reishi, cordyceps, lion's mane, and shiitake—have been used for centuries throughout Asia to strengthen immunity and treat a variety of ills. Modern research shows that these fungal superstars are rich sources of lentinan, which helps fight infection; maitake D-fraction, which stimulates cancer-fighting immune cells; and beta-glucan. For the maximum immune-boosting impact, look for a product that contains a combination of medicinal mushrooms.



GO
NATURAL
IN 90



DAY
20

Revitalize Your Body with Sea Buckthorn

Sea buckthorn is best known as a topical beauty ingredient. But these Tibetan berries offer multiple internal health benefits too. "Because of its high vitamin C content, sea buckthorn has a strong overall toning effect, stimulates the body's defenses against infections, and helps you recover faster during convalescence," say Maria Transito Lopez Luengo and Carlota Manez Ariso, authors of *Medicinal Plants at Home*. They recommend it to prevent the flu and to help treat coughing, colds, and fever. "It also strengthens and aids digestion because it is astringent and antidiarrheal," say Luengo and Ariso. Additionally, sea buckthorn helps lower high cholesterol and prevent cardiovascular disease.

bonus tip! Apply sea buckthorn oil to your skin to soften, moisturize, and slow the signs of aging. It is good for restoring skin elasticity and smoothness because it stimulates cell regeneration.

DAY
21

Have an Attitude of Gratitude

Need something to be grateful for? Clinical trials suggest that simple gratitude can have dramatic and lasting effects on health and wellness. It can lower blood pressure, improve immune function, and foster better sleep quality. A study by researchers at Universities of Utah and Kentucky found that gratitude can also directly boost your immune system. The investigators observed that stressed-out law students who characterized themselves as optimistic actually had more disease-fighting cells in their bodies than those who succumbed to their stress.

DAY
22

Find Relief from Allergies

Butterbur is one of the best herbs for allergies and coughs related to allergies, say Gustavo Ferrer, MD, and Burke Lennihan, RN, authors of *Cough Cures*. "Butterbur worked as well as Flonase in one study and as well as Allegra in another," say Ferrer and Lennihan. "And if you have a cough that is allergy-related, butterbur is your best bet."



DAY
24

Be Good to Your Bones

There is plenty you can do to bolster bone health when you're young and slow bone loss in your later years, starting with your diet. Simple food choices that you can make to protect your bones include:

Best & Worst Foods for Strong Bones

Eat these ...

Salmon
Pastured dairy
Dark leafy greens
Eggs
Lean beef
Pumpkin seeds
Walnuts
Black beans

Not these ...

Sodium-rich foods
Hydrogenated oils
Cola-type drinks
Alcoholic beverages
Cured meats
Sugar
Caffeine
Chocolate

DAY
23

Eat to Beat IBS

Characterized by abdominal pain, bloating, constipation, and/or diarrhea, and the intense urge to have a bowel movement immediately after eating, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a painful and perplexing condition. Diet changes have been shown to help: Start by cutting back on whole grains, coffee, chocolate, and nuts, since these foods can often trigger symptoms. Also: Cook with turmeric or add it to smoothies—this spice helps calm inflammation in the digestive tract.



DAY
25

Clean Fruits & Veggies with Apple Cider Vinegar

"It's important to wash any pesticides and germs off your produce," says Becky Rapinchuk, author of *The Organically Clean Home* (cleanmama.net). Here's one of her simple recipes for removing residues from products—and it has germ-killing properties too:

½ cup apple cider vinegar
½ cup lemon juice
½ cup water

To make: Add ingredients to a spray bottle and shake to combine.

To use: Spray liberally on fruits and vegetables, then rinse in cold water and prepare as usual.

To store: Store in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

GO
NATURAL
IN 90



DAY 26 **Keep Elderberry on Hand**

Viral infections can be among the most stubborn ailments to treat. Antibiotics are designed to kill bacteria, not viruses. And most over-the-counter remedies offer only symptomatic relief. Elderberry, on the other hand, has proven to be a true superhero in the world of antiviral treatments. Research shows that black elderberry extract possesses potent immune-modulating and antioxidant properties thanks to its high flavonoid content. Studies show that elderberry flushes the virus out of the body by inducing both perspiration and bronchial secretions.

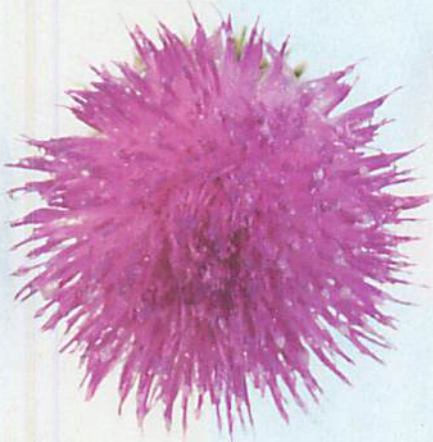
bonus tip! Use elderberry at the first sign of the flu—a Norwegian study on 60 flu patients found that elderberry extract helped relieve their symptoms four days earlier than their placebo-taking counterparts.

DAY 27 **Minimize Bathroom Visits**

Do you have an overactive bladder? "Schisandra is an excellent natural alternative to bladder control medications," says herbalist Karta Purkh Singh Khalsa, DN-C, RH. Schisandra is one of the premier astringents in Asian herbalism. Astringents tighten membranes, making it ideal for bladder control. It may also be beneficial for men. A scientific paper in the *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* found that schisandra relaxed prostate tissue, which may benefit urine flow.

DAY 28 **Protect Your Liver**

Many drugs can be harmful to your liver. A particular concern is over-the-counter acetaminophen (Tylenol), and cold and pain remedies that contain this pain reliever. Commonly prescribed medications, including statins, acid blockers, psychiatric drugs, certain antibiotics, and antifungals, are notorious for causing liver problems. To support liver health, add milk thistle extract to your daily supplement regimen. Studies suggest that milk thistle inhibits inflammation, stimulates new liver cell production, and maintains the integrity of liver cell membranes.



DAY 29 **Satisfy Cravings for Sweets Without Sugar**

What are the top natural alternatives to sugar? According to Debbie Adler, author of the new book *Sweet, Savory, & Free*, here are a few of the best natural sweeteners for baking:

Coconut nectar: "This is my go-to sweetener for just about everything sweet in my cookbook," says Adler.

Erythritol: This is a natural, low-glycemic sugar substitute. It's made from fruits and vegetables and has almost zero calories. It's often combined with xylitol and/or stevia.

Medjool dates: "I chop these into baked goods and also grind them into a date paste for bulk and sweetness," says Adler.

Stevia powder: Adler recommends using this in small quantities when baking to avoid an aftertaste.

DAY 30 **Make Your Own Chyawanprash**

Chyawanprash, a popular Ayurvedic herb formula, is a rejuvenative tonic that supports strength, immunity, and digestion, says herbalist Rosemary Gladstar, author of *Rosemary Gladstar's Herbal Healing for Men: Remedies & Recipes*. Chyawanprash may also support a healthy libido and sexual stamina. It's a mixture of powdered herbs, honey, and fruit that can be taken daily (1 tsp. two times daily). Here's Gladstar's recipe:

1 oz. ashwagandha powder
1 oz. eleuthero powder
1 oz. maca or astragalus powder
1 oz. rhodiola powder
½ oz. cinnamon powder
¼ oz. ginger powder
⅛ oz. cardamom powder
Honey, preferably raw
Fruit juice concentrate (not juice) or jam
Rose water (optional)

Combine all herbs in a bowl and stir well. Add enough honey and, if you're using them, fruit concentrate and rose water to form a thickish paste. If you use fruit concentrate, store mixture in the refrigerator.

