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# News on Adaptogens

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Adaptogens are natural substances found in a few rare plants and herbs that shield the body against the impact of stress - by balancing and harmonizing the body systems. Adaptogens are not in the food we normally eat, and must be added to the diet through supplementation. They are by definition natural, safe, and have no side effects.

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## How Can Adaptogens Make A Difference ?

A layman's explanation comes from Dr. Stephen Fulder, best-selling author and authority on herbs: "Health is dependent on the healthy functioning of the cells. Stress has an impact on the cellular level - depriving cells of their energy supply. When a cell cannot function properly, it becomes weak and damaged. The body gradually breaks down as disease and aging processes begin. This is where adaptogens enter the picture in a remarkable way.

Adaptogens work at the cellular level, on every cell in the body at the same time. The body is allowed full access to its energy potential and the cells remain healthy. The cells return to healthier functioning as the various body organs and systems begin to normalize. Ultimately the entire body will normalize itself and achieve the balance that nature intended. Adaptogens provide benefits which are impossible to get in any other way." They are completely unique in nature.

## Adaptogens

In recent years, scientists have analyzed the components of nature and learned that it provides the elements people need to remain healthy. It is universally accepted today, that certain foods are needed because of the proteins, vitamins and minerals they contain. Protein - the only substance that can build and replace cells. Vitamins and minerals - important substances that allow body systems to function properly.

According to Swedish scientist and author, Mikael Wahlstrom, in his book "Adaptogens - Nature's Key To Well-Being" - adaptogens are unique among nutrients. They correct disorders by instructing the body to do so. Adaptogens are the greatest weapon against the modern outspoke of stress.

Wahlstrom continues: "Our bodies are subject 24 hours a day to attacks from stress, viruses, bacteria, poisons, chemicals, etc. Yet the body manages to fight off most of these attacks, by a complex and efficient system designed by nature to fight off disease. However, weakened by the stress of modern life, exhausted by the pace at which we live, and poisoned by both our diet and the environment - our bodies need help to carry out the job of self-generation. Adaptogens correct disorders by instructing the body on what to do - working indirectly through the basic regulatory processes and organs.

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## The Cortisol Connection

Adaptogens are an entire category of herbs that assist the body in coping with stress by restoring hypothalamic cortisol receptor sensitivity. Adaptogens are some of the more popular supplements that help with cortisol control. They include ashwaganda, rhodiola and ginseng.

*By definition, adaptogens help the body adapt to high levels of physical and mental stress . . .*

The result is a controlled 'fight or flight' response that helps modulate cortisol levels. Cortisol in normal amounts is necessary for proper metabolic function, but a chronic elevated level has adverse effects on your health, body composition, mood and performance.

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## The History Of Adaptogens

The father of adaptogens is Russian scientist Dr. Israel I. Brekhman. He worked in the Far East Science Center of the USSR in Vladivostok as Head of its Department of Physiology and Pharmacology of Adaptation. There, beginning in 1956, he and his associates studied the effectiveness of Siberian, Chinese and other Far East medicinal plants on the basis of daily and seasonal changes in individuals as well as under differing environmental circumstances.

He originated the new science of ecological pharmacology when he investigated the complex formulas found in the ancient Chinese pharmacopoeia. In order to sort out all of the 233 plants, their admixture and reputed effects that he was investigating, Dr. Brekhman devised four elaborate computer programs. The actions he thought to classify were: tonic, diuretic, synthetic, antitoxic and so forth. The reason for such programs was to reinvestigate obvious beneficial effects being achieved by Oriental practitioners of herbal medicine. The computer identified a nucleus of ten groups of recipes that were particularly therapeutic.

*Another of Dr. Brekhman's discoveries was that Western medicine is too circumscribed in scope. It restricts itself to isolates which the pharmaceutical companies can patent and sell as individual products. However, such isolates comprise a limited amount of atomic structural information. By the pharmaceutical industry selecting only those drug synthetics which can be produced by patents, the American medical consumer receives only a small fraction of the world's healing components.*

*In contrast, the more elaborate adaptogenic plant remedies with which Dr. Brekhman was working contain several million pieces of structural information. Thus, the possibilities of more complex tonic and healing effects have been increased markedly.* The Brekhman adaptogens represent natural substances in nonprescription, over-the-counter form.

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## The King Of Adaptogens

Dr. Brekhman observed that spotted deer seek out a particular plant during the time their antlers are growing. This plant, called eleutherococcus (sometimes called Siberian Ginseng) became Dr. Brekhman's greatest discovery and focus of much of his work. Dr. Brekhman's exhaustive studies proved that eleutherococcus was invaluable to man in so many ways, that it is now termed "King of Adaptogens."

His discovery set in motion a lifetime of work investigating other substances and properties found in thousands of plants. For 45 years, Brekhman applied scientific methodology to the study of plants, breaking the biological codes and analyzing the molecular structures, finding what particular benefit each held for man.

Brekhman demonstrated many of these special benefits in one of the most massive, sustained and successful programs of human testing in recorded scientific history. *Only in the former Soviet Union could such an undertaking be conceived and carried out.* Dr. Brekhman was the visionary who pioneered a vast collective scientific effort – top secret – within the former Soviet Union – *involving hundreds of scientists*, all working to discover and prove the safety and remarkable benefits of adaptogens. *Thousands of men, women and children of all ages participated* in these studies – populations of schools, hospitals, factories, even an entire town.

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## Adaptogens For Sports And Space Successes

Not the least of Dr. Brekhman's accomplishments was helping to achieve a healthy image for Russian astronauts and athletes – both of which were bathing in the limelight of the world starting with the Sputnik spacecraft – and going on to the strong Olympic performances of athletes from both Russia and their allies.

Dr. Brekhman's nutritional supplements restored the natural balance of the cosmonauts' physiology and protected them against the stresses of motion, vertigo, weightlessness, enforced inactivity, and other difficulties encountered in space flight.

The chief nutritional advisor to the Russian Olympic teams, Dr. Sergey Portugalov, and member of the World Anti-Doping Conference said in 1994: "Sports have always been a major priority in Russia . . . and for the past ten years, we have primarily focused on achieving results without using drugs. Our greatest competitive advantage has come from performance supplements derived from natural plant materials. The nutritional support provided by these supplements helped our athletes achieve better performance, stamina, endurance, strength, recovery, immune resistance, muscle development, and adaptation to changes in climate, time zones and altitude."

And now, scientists have discovered that nature provides something else essential to the diet . . . adaptogens.

*These rare plants with adaptogenic qualities lived through the Ice Age by adapting to and thriving in the most severe living conditions on earth.*

Because of this - the discoverer of adaptogens in the mid 1900s - Dr. Israel Brekhman - believed that they might possess qualities that could help our bodies adapt to the stresses of modern life . . . and hard athletic training.

## What Adaptogens Can Do ?

Numerous studies have shown the unique benefits of diets supplemented with adaptogens, as scientists around the world have begun to study and confirm the valuable properties of these plants. That research is ongoing today in the world scientific community. Among the ways adaptogens help the body:

- helps body to "adapt" to stress
- deeper more restful sleep
- helps balance body systems
- helps improve immune resistance
- helps focus and concentration
- helps improve recovery time
- helps improve (athletic) performance
- helps decrease anxiety
- helps improve muscle tone
- helps increase strength
- helps increase energy and stamina
- improves feeling of overall well-being