

Need a Pick-Me-Up? Try A Tonic!

There are many single herbs which act as tonics. Ginseng is the “king of tonics” in Chinese herbal medicine (see sidebar) and a major tonic in Native American medicine. However, there are many other herbs that have been used as tonics worldwide.

Eleuthero root has been prized in Russia for its adaptogenic effects and is taken by many classes of people, from office workers to athletes. It is even used by Russian cosmonauts. Rhodiola is another tonic herb used in Russia.

In India, ashwaganda is prized for its tonic properties. Gotu kola is another tonic from that region. Suma and maca are South American tonics. Licorice has been an important European tonic, used to counteract thirst, balance blood sugar levels, improve energy and immune function and reduce stress. Europeans discovered the benefits of ginkgo as a tonic to counteract memory loss and cardiovascular problems in the aging.

Lycium fruit (or goji berries) are an important tonic in both Tibetan and Chinese medicine, which brings up the point that the Chinese recognized many tonics besides ginseng. Some of these include astragalus, schizandra, reishi and ganoderma mushrooms and dong quai.

Gynostemma is a recently discovered tonic in Chinese medicine that enhances all the energies of the body and has a tonic effect similar to that of ginseng. Another Chinese tonic that has recently come to the West is cordyceps. This powerful fungi enhances respiration and circulation, increasing stamina and resistance to disease.

While these tonic herbs can be used as singles, it is even more beneficial to take them in combination. A formula provides the benefits of several tonic herbs in one convenient dose. So here are some tonic herbal formulas that can help to counteract some of the factors that cause us to grow weaker as we age.

Adaptamax

Adaptamax is a Western formula of herbs with adaptogenic and tonic properties. When taken regularly, this formula helps reduce stress levels while improving energy and immune function. It also helps to balance blood sugar levels. It contains Korean ginseng, rhodiola, eleuthero root, gynostemma, ashwaganda, suma, astragalus, reishi mushroom, ginkgo and schizandra.

Chinese Lung Support

Although Lung Support is primarily used to help weakness and deficiency in respiratory function, it has many other benefits as well. It helps to balance blood sugar levels and strengthen the body where there is weakness and fatigue. It strengthens the immune system in the elderly who are particularly prone to respiratory infections and pneumonia. It contains astragalus, dong quai, lycium, panax ginseng root, schizandra fruit and licorice.

Ginkgo/Gotu Kola with Bacopa

Ginkgo/Gotu Kola is a tonic for the brain and nervous system. It contains antioxidants that protect brain function and improve memory in the aging. It contains ginkgo and gotu kola along with bacopa, an herb that supports memory and learning processes.

Mineral Chi Tonic

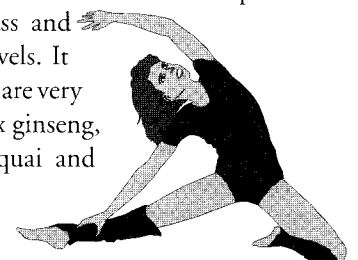
This liquid adaptagen and tonic supplies trace minerals, important for enzyme systems and physical structure of the body, in a base of adaptagenic and tonic herbs. It supports adrenal function, which reduces stress and combats chronic inflammation and fatigue. It also lifts depression and enhances general tissue healing. It contains gynostemma, lycium, schizandra, eleuthero, astragalus, licorice root, reishi mushroom and ginkgo. Being a liquid formula, it is a good choice for people who have a hard time swallowing capsules.

Nervous Fatigue Formula

This blend helps people who feel tired and “burned out” from chronic stress. It is especially helpful for people who suffer from fatigue and restless sleep. It helps resolve mental confusion, muddled thinking, emotional sensitivity (“touchiness”) and short-term memory loss. It enhances energy and sex drive.

Spleen Activator

This is a tonic for weak digestion. It overcomes wasting and debility by improving digestion and metabolism of protein. It improves muscle tone and mass and helps to balance blood sugar levels. It is especially good for people who are very thin and weak. It contains panax ginseng, astragalus, atractylodes, dong quai and licorice.



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With so many tonic formulas, how do you pick the one that's best for you?

Here's a “quick guide” to help you identify the best tonic formulas or single herbs for you.

- Poor digestion, lack of muscle tone—Spleen Activator, Trigger Immune, Wild American Ginseng
- Under 30 and feeling tired and stressed—SUMA Combination, Mineral-Chi Tonic, Eleuthero Root
- Over 30 and feeling tired and stressed—Trigger Immune, Mineral Chi Tonic, Adaptamax, Korean Ginseng
- Feeling “burned-out” at any age—Nervous Fatigue Formula
- Lack of resistance to disease—Trigger Immune, Chinese Lung Support, Cordyceps
- Anxiety from dealing with too much stress—Adaptamax, SUMA Combination, Eleuthero Root
- Help with memory and brain function—Ginkgo/Gotu Kola, Nervous Fatigue Formula, Ginkgo
- Recovery from chronic illness—Chinese Lung Support, Trigger Immune, Mineral-Chi Tonic