



ADAPTOGENIC HERBS TO HELP WITH STRESS

Adapting to your body's immune system and acting as immunomodulators adaptogens are herbs and compounds with myriad benefits that can ease tension and stress both psychologically or physiologically. They act as neuroprotectants, antidepressants, anxiolytics and more.

In the physiological spectrum, adaptogens work by modulating your Hypothalamic Pituitary Adrenal (HPA axis. This is a major component of your neuroendocrine system which controls stress response by secreting catecholamines and glucocorticoids (especially cortisol). The neuroendocrine system is a system of network of glands and organs in the body that make hormones.

1) Ginseng (*Panax or Asian*) - is a well-known adaptogen and is considered by many as the most potent. It's been shown to improve feelings of calmness as well as some aspects of working memory.

2) Holy Basil (*Ocimum tenuiflorum*) - is known in India as a powerful anti-aging supplement and there is also evidence that it may help prevent the recurrence of canker sores which are thought to be induced by stress as well as other types of ulcers.

3) Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*) - also known as Indian ginseng it can help stabilize cortisol levels and a 2020 study found that it has neuroprotective effects. With therapeutic compounds, including choline, saponins, alkaloids, and withanolides - a particularly important withanolide in ashwagandha is withaferin-A; a steroidal lactone working to reduce cancer risk, protect against excessive oxidative stress, and promote feelings of well-being.

4) Schisandra (*Schisandra chinensis*) - is a medicinal fruit that can help boost endurance and mental performance and is most well-known for supporting the adrenal glands as well as liver function. Eastern medicine uses this adaptogen in reducing fatigue, treating insomnia, supporting immune function, and enhancing cardiovascular health.

More importantly, Schisandra fruit contains a multitude of bioactive substances, lignans, which are polyphenols with estrogen like structures. Research contends that Schisandra can ‘effectively blunt stress hormone, secretion, thereby alleviating anxiety, and promoting relaxation’.

5) Suma root (*Hebanthe paniculata*) - also known as Brazilian ginseng, is used as a cellular oxygenator and taken to improve circulation, balance blood sugar levels, enhance the immune system, strengthen the muscular system, and enhance memory.

In all, to help the body to adapt to stress by improving the immune system.

6) Astragalus root (*Astragalus membranaceus*) - is known to boost immunity and potentially buffer the effects of stress. It has positive effects on blood glucose levels, upper respiratory infection, diabetes, liver health, allergic rhinitis, and chronic kidney disease.

7) Rhodiola (*Rhodiola rosea*) - has an ‘anti-fatigue’ effect that increases mental performance giving you the ability to concentrate with the ability to support healthy thyroid function.

The adaptogenic compounds found in rhodiola root, known as salidroside and rosavin, demonstrate that rhodiola suppresses stress-induced cortisol secretion.

These **anxiety antidotes** for less stress:

1) Cordyceps:

- ✦ Nutrient-rich mushrooms that have all the benefits of other antioxidant foods
- ✦ They have a positive impact on cortisol levels and oxidative stress as well as anti-fatigue properties
- ✦ Cordyceps help the brain and body handle anxiety by delivering more energy to the muscles and pumping oxygen through the bloodstream.
- ✦ Help provide energy without jitters and relieves stress symptoms in the process

2) Reishi mushroom

- ✦ Minimizes anxiety and creates calm feelings

3) Lion's Mane:

- ✦ There are two parts to this mushroom: mycelium and fruiting body
- ✦ Mycelium is the root system
- ✦ Fruiting body is used for reproduction
- ✦ Lion's mane sourced from the fruiting body reduces anxiety better than mycelium extracts alone
- ✦ More importantly, helps improve cognitive functions.