

PHARMACIST'S GUIDE TO NATURAL HEALTH

The search for natural health products is becoming more and more challenging each day for the simple reason that there is so much variety and choice available. Most of the time it is a struggle reading the ingredients on the bottles because they are always written in small print and it can be close to impossible working out which product has more or less of certain ingredients...not to mention even knowing what the ingredients are in the first place!

Having said that, there are so many issues that I question in regards to natural health products and although I still don't have all the answers it appears to be a never ending journey to knowledge. I believe in having a balanced lifestyle and to obtain as many nutrients from the basic food pyramid in as many natural forms as possible. I understand that given our busy and jam-packed lifestyles, that obtaining sufficient nutrients can be hard, especially when in some instances that my 'fresh' produce looks like it is a hundred years old after only 2-3 days and I end up just having to throw it out or it looks perfect after 10 days and wonder how many pesticides it has drowned in before entering my home...So, how do we get the right nutrients in the best possible condition without growing and farming this produce ourselves?

Since we can't all become farmers (although that *could* be incredibly satisfying!), my next question is about supplementing these nutrients? How do we know which ones are synthetically produced or those that are obtained from natural sources? How do I know that what I am putting into my body is safe? Where are they being sourced from; are they free from contamination? It also seems like it is forever impossible to keep up with new and 'improved' herbs/vitamins etc. or is this fear/feeling of 'lack/missing out' what marketing instils in us as a society? How did all these people survive all these years without having to take them? Or will these magic potions and cures allow us to live 100 years longer?!

I believe that life is about balance, and that true health begins with a happy heart, peaceful mind and nourishing our bodies with fresh and varied produce. I believe that our triad of needs in life; mind, body and spirit need to be met so that we can charge through life with confidence and vitality. I believe that if we are neglecting one or more arms of this triangle that we will feel depleted and can't live our lives the way we deserve.

I don't know if it is just me that feels this way or if in fact others do as well; but there is so much available that I feel overwhelmed as to how can I possibly take it all? Almost as if I am not taking these supplements then I won't be living my life at its best, so I end up feeling like I am not doing all that I can for my health. I could potentially be taking up to 100 pills a day for the hope that I will be working at my peak performance; but is it worth it if I'm popping pills or mixing powders every 30 minutes and missing the present moment?

Equally, having a science background if I did feel depleted and that my needs were not being met through my diet, then I would most likely go to my doctor and request a blood test to actually show me or tell me whether I am deficient in something specific rather than 'guessing' what the issue is so I can fix the problem at its source. If I wanted to take supplements, I would try a substance ideally one at a time for at least four to six weeks and see if it is benefiting me. If it is that is fantastic, if it is not then I would certainly speak to a naturopath to provide some guidance.

Despite my pharmacy background, I do struggle with finding information about herbs; and unless I have a big piece of paper to write everything down it truly is a mission to compare products and know which one is better than the next. A lot of the information that is available varies from different sites, is repetitive or is just not very user-friendly. So, from personal experience I wanted to try and make this process a bit easier...I appreciate that with our busy and extremely time poor lifestyles we want all the help we can get to simplify this!

I have tried to gather as much practical information regarding the vitamins, minerals, amino acids and herbs that are currently available in the 'mainstream' health products and tried to answer important questions that I feel most people would want to know. I have then briefly discussed the most 'common' areas of health that people seek natural alternatives for to help make your decision process a bit easier. Next, I have written and found the formulation of the mainstream natural health brands and spelt out the ingredients and their strengths so that you can compare the products in an easy and consistent manner in the comfort of your own home rather than being rushed or moved out of the way with trolleys! I personally look for this information and if I struggle with finding the difference despite having some training in this area then I am assuming that this would benefit other people too!

This book is to be used as a quick guide and by no means goes through studies of efficacy or reviews clinical trials; this is not my purpose. I am not here to determine how well a product works and its place in therapy; my aim is simply to provide

a practical basis to help your decision making process to save you from accessing various sites and books. It does not take the place of consulting with your doctor, pharmacist or naturopath if you are taking other medications or have other medical conditions; and in these instances I truly believe that it is imperative to do so. Although these products are 'natural', anything used for a therapeutic means can interfere and interact with various factors so for your own benefit do not be shy to discuss with your health care professional.

❖ **COMMON HEALTH CONDITIONS REQUIRING NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS:**

There are a number of common health conditions that people often come into the pharmacy, supermarket or health food stores to try and treat. They are often used because traditional 'western' medicine has failed them, they want to try an alternative or others want to add an extra element to their treatment to hopefully get the best outcome.

There is no right or wrong way in selecting medications as we all have the freedom of choice in whatever decisions we make for our health. The only consideration is that if you are currently taking other medication, then you should check with your doctor first as they can interact and possibly be detrimental to your health.

❖ **VARICOSE VEINS**

What are varicose veins?

These are veins that become enlarged due to ill working valves and cause the pooling of blood to occur. They are most commonly found in the lower legs and can be painful when you stand from long periods of time as the blood cannot be transported to the rest of the body. The veins can often look lumpy, large and may be darker in colour compared to other veins. They often become more obvious in the heat, tend to affect women more than men possibly due to hormones and can be very common in pregnancy.

What symptoms can occur with this?

You can experience;

- × Swelling in the legs and ankles
- × Tired, aching and sore legs
- × Lumpy, large and obvious veins in the legs especially when standing for long periods of time.
- × Restless legs syndrome has been associated with varicose vein sufferers

What causes Varicose Veins?

There are a few factors that cause it to happen;

- × Hereditary is a common cause
- × Being overweight
- × Lack of exercise
- × Pregnancy; causes hormone changes, fluid retention and weight gain which can all cause or exacerbate the incidence
- × Menopause
- × Prolonged standing
- × Abdominal straining puts pressure on the system and people with haemorrhoids tend to suffer more with them.

How can you minimise Varicose Veins?

The following can help to reduce the progression of varicose veins or help to reduce them from occurring;

- ✓ Increase the amount of exercise; at least 20-30 minutes per day 5 to 7 days per week
- ✓ Stop smoking; this can improve circulation within the body
- ✓ Reduce the amount of alcohol that you consume to reduce fluid retention and increase your water intake to at least 6 to 8 glasses per day
- ✓ Reduce standing for long periods of time and try to move around every half an hour to help the blood flow freely around the body. Try and do exercises as if you were on a plane by rotating your feet around to help circulate the fluid and shift the weight from your feet.
- ✓ Avoid sitting for a long period of time; try and move around and improve circulation
- ✓ Try to elevate your legs higher than your heart level to try and move the blood to the rest of the body where it is needed at least 20 minutes per day
- ✓ Wear compression stockings as these help to compress and stop the fluid build-up in your legs and feet and assist the valves to push the blood back to where it should be flowing.
- ✓ Eat a lot of fibre; avoid processed and refined foods to prevent constipation as straining can make the issue worse.
- ✓ Wear loose fitting clothing and make sure nothing is cutting circulation in your legs i.e. knee high socks.

What kind of compression stockings is available?

It is vital to remember to get the right size for your legs; you do not want ones that are too loose and don't give any compression or too tight so that it will cut off circulation even further. You need to measure first thing in the morning when your legs will be least likely to be swollen and measure; the size of your ankle, the length of your leg and around the biggest part of your calf.

You can choose between knee high, thigh high and waist high; I have always used the waist high ones as they stayed up and are the most comfortable for me. As well as this, there is open or closed toe depending upon what you prefer and there is a maternity style stocking for you if you are pregnant.

There are various grades of compression that is provided;

Class 1: 15-20 mm Hg compression

Class 2: 20-30 mm Hg compression

Class 3: 30-40 mm Hg compression (need a prescription from your doctor to obtain stockings with this level)

What are the natural OTC treatments available for varicose veins?

Essentially the aim is to try and improve the circulation in the legs, to reduce fluid and improve/strengthen the connective tissue and arterial walls. All antioxidants help to reduce free radical damage to the capillaries and can improve the integrity of the walls. Therefore the following may assist:

- ✓ **CoQ10:** can improve circulation
- ✓ **Zinc:** can help to improve the connective tissues
- ✓ **Bilberry:** can help to improve the connective tissues
- ✓ **Dandelion** and **Vitamin B6** can help as a diuretic an reduce fluid retention and load in the legs
- ✓ **Vitamin A, C, E,** and **grape seed extract** are powerful antioxidants
- ✓ **Horse chestnut** can reduce the appearance of veins by reducing inflammation and fluid retention
- ✓ **Oxerutins** reduce the leakage from capillaries to reduce fluid retention

The main commercially available products that are available specifically for varicose veins contain different ingredients which all work in different ways. It can be a good idea to trial one product and see whether there is any benefit and move onto the next one after at least a period of 12 weeks.

All products need to be taken with care if you have any heart, kidney, liver or blood clotting disorders and you should not use if you are taking any medication to thin the blood including anti-inflammatories. You must ask your doctor, pharmacist or naturopath before starting these medications as they can check to make sure if it is safe to use.

PRODUCT	INGREDIENTS	COMMENTS
TOTALLY NATURAL VEINS CLEAR	*Grape seed extract *Riscus *hesperidin *Vitamin C	All are antioxidants that work to strengthen the capillaries and tighten the veins which may reduce aching
VENOTREX	Horse chestnut	This needs to be taken for a minimum of 2 months but you may see a benefit after 4 weeks.
PAROVEN	Oxerutins 250mg	This is an antioxidant that can reduce the leakage of fluid from the capillaries to reduce oedema.
PAROVEN FORTE	Oxerutins 500mg	This is an antioxidant that can reduce the leakage of fluid from the capillaries to reduce oedema.

❖ **NAUSEA/VOMITING**

Nausea is the feeling of wanting to vomit which can be very uncomfortable and can affect anyone of any age.

What causes these symptoms?

- × This can be caused by various factors;
- × Pregnancy
- × Food poisoning
- × Medications
- × Underlying medical condition
- × Migraines
- × Motion sickness (boat, car or plane)
- × Certain foods can react in you a certain way
- × Chemotherapy

What treatments are available?

Truthfully, there are only mild treatments available over-the-counter. The most effective treatments are available on prescription from your doctor which would be necessary for severe symptoms; although they are more likely to cause drowsiness compared to the milder treatments available in pharmacies or supermarkets.

INGREDIENT	COMMENTS	DIRECTIONS	BRAND
GINGER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Safe to use in pregnancy and breastfeeding ✓ <i>Can interact with blood thinners</i> 	Take 1 to 2 tablets every 2 hours until relief is obtained. Maximum of 4 tablets in 24 hours	BLACKMORES TRAVEL GINGER TRAVACALM GINGER NATURES OWN GINGER

HINTS AND TIPS:

- ✓ Try to eat smaller meals more frequently so that the feeling of wanting to vomit decreases and there will be less stomach acids produced to reduce symptoms
- ✓ Avoid dairy, oily, processed, spicy and heavy foods as it can make symptoms worse and require extra digestive enzymes to break down the food.
- ✓ Instead try to eat dry crackers, biscuits and toast with very simple toppings such as jam that will be easy to digest
- ✓ Cold foods can help minimise nausea such as; frozen Hydralyte ice blocks, lemonade and carbonated drinks can help to cool the lining as you swallow. I personally find mint/peppermint very effective to help cool my 'insides' and reduce nausea, especially if I sip at cold water after eating a peppermint lolly
- ✓ If medications are causing nausea/vomiting, try to take them after food as it may minimise these symptoms.
- ✓ If it is caused by food poisoning then avoid the offending agent! If symptoms last for more than 48 hours to see your doctor as it may be giardia or a more severe illness that requires strong treatment from your doctor. Ensure that you do keep your fluids up.

❖ FEMININE HYGIENE:

The female anatomy is unique and 'normal' conditions are very different to the rest of the body which can make us prone to infections such as thrush or bacterial UTI's. For some of us it can be a sensitive or embarrassing topic of conversation so it can be neglected very easily.

The vagina is more acidic than the rest of the body which is why it is vital not to use soaps; they can cause dryness and make it more alkaline which can upset the normal balance. The following are some good hints and tips to maintain a healthy vagina;

- ✓ Wear cotton underwear and avoid tight fitting clothing as much as possible to allow air to constantly flow. Lack of air can lead to thrush and itching which can be very uncomfortable!
- ✓ Minimise sugar as this can cause bacteria or yeast to thrive; so eat a well-balanced diet and drink plenty of water.
- ✓ It is advisable to keep the 'good bacteria' that work to protect the area and fight off infections; these are found in natural yogurt, drinking Yakult or the most efficient dose of probiotics is found in a product such as Ethical Nutrients Inner Health Plus. They help to maintain the healthy balance of bacteria for optimum vaginal health.
- ✓ Try not to use douches/cleansers unless advised to do so by your doctor. The vagina is designed to make secretions to cleanse and flush it out. Excess washing can remove the good bacteria and upset the normal balance there
- ✓ It is a good idea to pass urine after sex and to shower as this will clear out the bacteria from your partner as they are not the same. Otherwise it can predispose you having urinary tract infections or pass on thrush to each other
- ✓ It is important to change tampons regularly; as if you keep it in for 6 or more hours it can cause a condition called TSS. This causes symptoms of fever, chills, nausea and vomiting. It is also important to change your pad regularly as it can cause humidity, odour and an irritation similar to a nappy rash.
- ✓ If you have dryness in the vagina then consider using a lubricant or a moisturiser. Dryness could cause painful sex and discomfort.

What other products are available to treat the vagina?

BRANDS	DIRECTIONS	COMMENTS	INGREDIENTS
CANDEX	1 daily	Contains probiotics to restore the vaginal bacteria balance. It has a probiotic yeast strain specific to prevent thrush	<u>Lactobacillus acidophilus</u> 32 billion <u>Lactobacillus rhamnosus</u> 4 billion <u>Saccaromyces cerevisiae</u> 4 billion
VAGICARE	Insert 1 pessary at bedtime for 6 nights	Restores the vaginal pH back to the normal acidity of 4-4.4	Sustained release <u>Vitamin C</u>
VAGITEST	Swab vagina secretions with the pH device	This helps determine if your vagina is at its appropriate pH level and ascertain if this is the reason for your symptoms	pH measuring device
INNER HEALTH PLUS	1 daily	Probiotic to restore the good bacteria throughout your body, including the vagina	<u>Lactobaciullus acidophilus</u> 12.5 billion <u>Bifidobacterium lactis</u> 12.5 billion <u>Colostrum powder bovine</u> 67mg

❖ What are UTI's?

This is a bacterial infection of the urinary tract that is most often caused by E.Coli. The infection causes symptoms such as burning, pain on urinating, the feeling of urgency to urinate, cramping and fever. They can be caused by various factors such as; sexual intercourse, hygiene practices or having a weakened immune system.

How can you treat a UTI?

If the symptoms are only mild and there is no fever present then you may try to manage the symptoms over-the-counter. However, it normally is not recommended to ignore UTI's as they can become worse and infect further organs in the body such as the kidney. This is critical in the elderly as they are likely to have further serious complications from untreated UTI's even causing hallucinations.

It is important to drink plenty of water will help to flush the kidneys and organs out and ensure that you do not get dehydrated as well as dilute the urine so it is not painful to pass. If there is a fever, blood in the urine, symptoms are not clearing after 48 hours or getting worse then you must see your doctor for antibiotic treatment. They will most likely take a urine sample to check what exactly is occurring.

<u>PRODUCT</u>	<u>USE</u>	<u>DIRECTIONS</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
<u>Urinary alkalinises</u> <u>Ural or Citravescent</u>	Neutralise the acid in the urine so that it reduces pain/burning on urinating	Dissolve 1-2 sachets in 200mL water four times a day	-Can be used in kids over 6 -Does not treat the infection, simply neutralises the acidity -should not be used whilst taking certain antibiotics as it can reduce how well it works
<u>Anti-bacterial Hiprex</u>	This is an antibacterial to help treat the infection if mild. It can be used daily as a preventative if you suffer from them recurrently	Take 1 tablet twice a day if there is an infection. Take 1 daily for preventative means	-Cannot be used whilst taking Ural or Citravescent as these will reduce how well Hiprex will work
<u>Cranberry</u>	It works to acidify the urine and to prevent infections from occurring and to help treat the infection a bit faster than without them	Depending on the brands; there are various strengths available	Should be used mainly as a preventative, it may not clear the infection once it has occurred as it is not anti-bacterial
<u>Probiotics</u> Ethical Nutrients Urinary tract support	Contains herbs traditionally used to cleanse and detox the urinary system	Take 5 tablets four times per day	Contains the herbs: Cherokee Rose 1.5g, China root 1.2g and Japanese Climbing Fern 832mg. used at the initial symptoms to help detox the system

How do you treat it in pregnancy?

I always recommend that you see your doctor if you are pregnant and have any symptoms of a UTI. A systemic infection can affect your baby and the risk of delaying appropriate treatment is not advisable. Drink at least 8 glasses of water per day to reduce the acidity of the urine, but seek advice from your doctor.

❖ FAMILY PLANNING

What advice would you give for a woman trying to fall pregnant?

Firstly, I would recommend getting familiar with your body and its natural cycle. There is so much information in books and the internet; however if you are not familiar with your body's rhythm then you won't really be able to use this valuable tool. Keep a diary and make notes of important dates, such as the start date of your periods, any cramping or symptoms that you notice and any obvious changes to your vaginal secretions as a guide to what is happening with your body.

It is a good idea to stop taking the contraceptive pill at least 3-6 months prior to starting to conceive to allow time for your system to come back 'normal'. Remember, these are 'external' hormones that you have been taking, so your body will need to re-learn how to function without getting them from another source and in some people this can take longer to regulate than in others.

I would recommend starting folic acid supplements at least 1 month, but preferably 3 months prior to conceiving. Folic acid may prevent the occurrence of neural tube defects and a dose as low as 400 micrograms is all that you need. Either you can supplement it on its own using a product called Megafol, or you can use a pre-conception/pregnancy formula to give you extra nutrients such as iron, iodine and calcium that may be beneficial once you actually fall pregnant.

It is very important to ensure that your body is up-to-date with all the vaccines, especially measles, mumps and rubella. It may be a good idea to get a 'once over' given by your doctor to ensure that you are in the best of health and you can be rest-assure that your body is ready to house a new little life.

Exercise is vital to help with circulation and improve your health prior to conception. An underweight body can equally be harmful to falling pregnant or sustaining a pregnancy as being overweight. However, being overweight can lead to more discomfort during pregnancy such as back pain, sleeplessness and can lead to gestational diabetes which can cause complications in the new born baby including a high body weight. Exercise can also help to reduce labour complications and if you have strong muscles and good breathing skills this may make labour that little bit easier.

A good healthy diet is also vital for pre-conception so that your body is full of vitality and nutrients! Try and incorporate the following changes/additions into your diet. Obviously, each person may have a different amount of needs and you can discuss these things with your doctor;

- ✓ Reduce the amount of saturated fats, refined sugars, processed foods and those with preservatives and additives.
- ✓ Consider eating good saturated fats as those in nuts, legumes and avocado. Sticking to the traditional Food Pyramid is excellent for maintaining a healthy and balanced diet.
- ✓ High amount of folic acid are vital and natural sources include green leafy vegetables, fruits, nuts, cereals, legumes and eggs.
- ✓ Stop alcohol, smoking and all illicit drug use at least 3 months prior to conception as they all can reduce fertility and impair your health prior to conceiving. If you are having trouble; try to reduce slowly until you have eventually cut it out completely. If you smoke 10 cigarettes per day, try to cut down 2 cigarettes per day per week until zero and if you start this as early as possible if you know you want to start planning for a family the more successful you will be.
- ✓ Stop caffeine ideally for 3 months prior as it can reduce fertility and during pregnancy can cause increased heart rate, increased spontaneous abortion and congenital abnormalities. Although different books say different things about the safety of caffeine and the number of cups per day you can/are allowed; try to reduce as much as you can, since it is an external chemical that your body and the growth of your baby could do without and not consuming it would without doubt be safer than consuming it.
- ✓ Zinc is vital for healthy sperm and is a potent anti-oxidant
- ✓ Manganese and Magnesium is vital for fertility.
- ✓ Consider stress relieving exercises such as yoga, Pilates and meditation may help to promote calmness and wellbeing. Try to adopt a more streamlined/simple lifestyle and remove any of the factors that make you stressed. If work is stressful, see if you can do other roles that are not as taxing. At home, try and get your partner or family members to pick up the slack if you are struggling to balance everything. Your physical and mental strength and health is paramount during pre-conception and pregnancy; so really review your lifestyle and cut-out the aspects that are not benefiting you.

When can I start to test for pregnancy?

The pregnancy tests available over the counter work by measuring whether or not your body is producing any hCG or the hormone called human Chorionic Gonadotropin. This hormone is present in your urine if you are pregnant and increases as your pregnancy progresses. The blood tests available from your doctor measure the exact amount of this hormone is produced so is a quantitative measure to indicate how far along in your pregnancy you are.

Although there are so many brands of pregnancy tests on the market, it is vital to note that different women produce varying amount of hCG so one woman may get a conclusive result much earlier than the next. Technically, successful implantation can occur anywhere from 7 to 10 days after ovulation. Meaning that hCG can be produced in some women as early as 7 days after ovulation, which is 7 days before when your period is due. If however, a negative result is shown if you are actually pregnant then the amount hCG produced tends to double every 2 to 3 days; meaning that you should test every 2 to 3 days after the first one if you actually do believe that you may be pregnant.

So although technically you can check early, if you can wait until you have missed your period or approximately 14 days past ovulation (if your natural cycle is 28 days) it is more likely to give you an accurate result rather than re-checking so often.

<u>BRAND</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
First response pregnancy test	Pregnancy testing has evolved to become so sensitive that pregnancy can now be detected as early as 6 days before the day of your missed period (5 days before day of expected period). First Response In stream Pregnancy tests are easy to use and over 99% accurate
Clear blue pregnancy test	All Clearblue pregnancy tests are over 99% accurate when used from the day your period is due. So sensitive you can test early – Clearblue Pregnancy Test with Conception Indicator can be used up to 4 days before
Pregnosis	Available in-stream or a dip and read test. It can be used at any time of the day and claims to be over 99% accurate as well as being the most economical. Can be use to detect pregnancy by the end of the first week of pregnancy.
Fore life	It can be used 5 to 7 days prior to the expected period and claims to be over 99% accurate, fast and easy to read results.

How do you know if you are pregnant?

There are some signs that may indicate that you are pregnant if you weren't too sure if you should take a pregnancy test. Obviously all women are different, so not all signs will occur in all women. Some women can have what is called 'implantation bleeding' which is spotting after 6 to 12 days of fertilisation. Some women will experience breast tenderness, soreness and cramping. Since the timing normally correlates with when you are due to get your period, most women won't notice and just attribute it to PMS.

What supplements should I take before or once I find out that I am pregnant?

If you are planning to conceive, then I would recommend starting supplements at least 1 month prior to starting but 3 months would be preferable. If you have fallen pregnant and have not taken supplements, then it is best to start right away and not to fret too much about not taking them before-hand. Some people would recommend if you re of ‘child-bearing’ age or think that pregnancy may occur, then to take a Folic Acid supplement just in case; they are cheaper than chips and at least at give you the peace of mind.

<u>PRODUCT</u>	<u>INGREDIENTS</u>	<u>DIRECTIONS</u>
Megafof	Folic Acid 500mcg or 5mg	Take 1 tablet daily
FGF	Folic Acid 300mcg Iron 80mg elemental iron (250mg ferrous sulphate)	Take 1 tablet daily with food
Fefol	Folic Acid 300mcg Iron 87mg elemental iron (270mg ferrous sulphate)	Take 1 daily
Ferro-F	Folic Acid 350mcg Iron 100mg elemental iron (310mg ferrous fumarate)	Take 1-2 tablet daily
Blackmore’s Pregnancy and Breastfeeding	EPA: 25mg, DHA: 125mg, B1: 500mcg, B2: 750mcg, B6: 750mcg, B12: 1.5mcg, Vit C: 30mg, D3:250IU, Vit E 5.2IU, folic acid: 250mcg, iron: 5mg, Magnesium 30mg, zinc: 8mg, <u>iodine: 125mcg</u> , calcium hydrogen phosphate: 200mg	Take 2 tablets daily with food
Elevit with Iodine	Vitamin B1: 1.55mg, B2: 1.8mg, B3: 19mg, B5: 10mg, B6: 2.6mg, B12: 4mcg, Vitamin C: 100mg, D3: 500IU, <u>Vitamin E: 22.35IU</u> , H: 200mcg, Folic acid: 800mcg, Calcium: 125mg, <u>Iron: 60mg</u> , <u>Magnesium: 100mg</u> , Phosphorous: 125mg, Copper: 1mg, Manganese: 1mg, Zinc: 7.5mg, <u>iodine: 250mg</u>	Take 1 tablet daily with food
Swisse Pre-conception, pregnancy and breastfeeding	EPA: 32.5mg, DHA: 137.5mg, B1: 1.4mg, B2: 1.4mg, B3: 18mg, B5: 4.58mg, B6: 41.1mg, B12: 2.6mcg, Biotin 30mcg, Folic Acid: 500mcg, Vit C: 60mg, <u>D3: 600IU</u> , Vit K: 60mcg, Carotenoids: 6mg, Grapeseed, Spirulina: 100mg, Calcium: 20mg, Magnesium: 20mg, Iron: 5mg, Zinc: 11mg, <u>iodine: 250mcg</u> , Copper: 1.3mg, Chromium: 30mcg, Molybdenum: 50mcg, Selenium: 65mcg	Take 1 tablet daily
Nature’s Own Pregnancy Platinum multivitamin	EPA: 90mg, DHA:60mg, betacarotene: 5mg, <u>B1:5mg</u> , <u>B2: 5mg</u> , B3: 20mg, B5: 10mg, <u>B6: 50mg</u> , Folic Acid: 500mcg, Vitamin C: 32mg, D3: 200 IU, Iodine 250mcg, Iron 5mg, Magnesium 10mg, Calcium 20mg, Zinc: 12mg, Silicon: 4.68mg, Chromium: 2.5mcg, Selenium: 16.25mcg, Manganese: 1mg	Take 1 tablet daily
Cenovis Pregnanacy and Breastfeeding formula	EPA: 35mg, DHA: 135mg, B1: 750mcg, B2: 750mcg, <u>B3: 5mg</u> , B5: 500mcg, B6: 20mg, <u>B12: 2mcg</u> , <u>Folic Acid: 225mcg</u> , Vit E: 5IU, <u>vitamin C: 40mg</u> , Betacarotene: 1.5mg, Calicum: 137.7mg, Phosphorous: 106.3mg, Magnesium: 42.5mg, <u>Iron: 5mg</u> , Zinc: 6mg, Iodine: 75mcg	Take 2 tablets daily
Blackmore’s I-Folic	Iodine 250mcg, Folic acid 500mg	Take 1 tablet daily

There are also naturopath/practioner only formulations such as Metagenics or Bioceticals; so if you feel you may need supplementation other than what has been listed above, then speak to your pharmacist or naturopath about whether they stock these ranges and whether or not you may require these formulations instead.

What pre-conception products are available for men?

There are products that are now available to improve the health and viability of men’s sperm. Although they have been available for a short period of time, they may be of benefit in those men who are unable to obtain a balanced diet or who wish to have the appropriate amount of nutrients prior to conception.

<u>PRODUCT</u>	<u>INGREDIENTS</u>	<u>DIRECTIONS</u>
MENEVIT	Vitamin C: 100mg, Zinc, 25mg, Vitamin E: 400IU, Folic Acid: 500mcg, Lycopene: 6mg, Garlic oil: 333mcg, selenium: 26mcg	Take 1 tablet daily

Do I need to take an Iron supplement if I am pregnant?

It depends on the woman whether or not they need extra supplementation during pregnancy. It is through regular blood tests and how you are feeling that will dictate whether or not your iron stores are high enough. Some women will gather enough iron from their diet alone however others have a higher requirement and will then need supplementation.

The degree to which the mother suffers from constipation and how sensitive she is to medication will also determine which product to use.

1. SPA-TONE: contains 5mg Iron per sachet

This is a liquid sachet form of iron that appears to be the most absorbed and tolerated on the stomach and is the least likely to cause constipation. It can be taken in addition to your pregnancy formulation.

Take 2 sachets per day on its own or dissolved in water or juice.

2. FERROGRADUMENT: contains 105mg Iron per tablet

This is stronger but it can upset a lot of women's stomach and can cause constipation. It can be minimised by taking it after food and with a glass of orange juice, as vitamin C increases the absorption of iron.

Take 1 tablet daily with food.

3. FERRO-GRAD C: 105mg elemental iron per tablet + 562mg vitamin C

This contains iron and vitamin C which works to increase the absorption of iron.

4. FERROLIQUID: 30mg elemental iron/5mL

This is a liquid form so will be absorbed faster than tablets, but it can upset the stomach and cause constipation. It should be taken through a straw to prevent teeth from being stained.

❖ **MENOPAUSE**

Menopause is defined as the end of menstruating in women and occurs when the ovaries no longer produce sex hormones. It can occur gradually and usually occurs between the ages of 45-55.

What are the symptoms of menopause?

Your periods may gradually become less frequent until they completely stop and you may also have one or all of the following symptoms;

- ✓ Irritability
- ✓ Weight gain
- ✓ Urinary leakage
- ✓ Headache
- ✓ Reduced libido
- ✓ Dry skin
- ✓ Aches and pains
- ✓ Vaginal dryness
- ✓ Night sweats/hot flushes
- ✓ Painful breasts.

Long term you are more likely to have heart disease and osteoporosis as female sex hormones normally protect against this.

How do you treat Menopause over-the-counter?

Clearly each case is individual and what outcomes are needed will vary. There are several options on prescription in the forms of gels, pessaries, creams, patches or tablets and since they know your full medical history it is always best to discuss this with your GP who will give you a full picture of what you can and cannot take or do.

However, there are natural products that are available over-the-counter. Their use may be controversial however some women have had success with their use.

Products that have been used in the market;

- ✓ Plant oestrogens; soy products (mimic the effects of female hormones in the body to reduce hot flashes)
- ✓ Foods rich in vitamin B (to help with endurance and mood).
- ✓ Foods rich in Vitamin E (to help prevent oxidative damage to the heart and improve skin)
- ✓ Red Clover (contains high amounts of isoflavones which are changed in the body to become like oestrogen)
- ✓ Black cohosh (has similar effects to oestrogen to reduce hot flashes)
- ✓ Oats and sage (can reduce hot flashes)
- ✓ Hops (acts as a phytoestrogen and can reduce hot flashes)
- ✓ Zinc (acts as an antioxidant to protect against damage to cells)
- ✓ Evening primrose oil (can help reduce hot flashes)
- ✓ Magnesium (acts as a muscle relaxant and can help improve moods and cramping)
- ✓ St Johns Wort (can improve the mood, anxiety and depression)
- ✓ Calcium and vitamin D supplementation (to assist in preventing osteoporosis since there is less protection without oestrogen)
- ✓ Wild Yam (this regulates the production of oestrogen)
- ✓ Dong Quai (affects oestrogen and other hormones)

There are certain foods that may also provide relief of menopause symptoms;

- ✓ Legumes, soybeans, chickpeas, lentils, green beans, flaxseed oil, sunflower seeds, cherries garlic and alfalfa.

What products are available?

<u>PRODUCT</u>	<u>INGREDIENTS</u>	<u>DIRECTIONS</u>
<u>Remifemin</u>	20mg black cohosh	Take 1 twice daily. It can take up to 4 weeks, best effects in 4-12 weeks.
<u>Promensil</u>	Red clover extract, calcium, isoflavones, soybean oil, magnesium, mixed tocopherols plus more	1-2 daily.
<u>Ethical nutrients hot flush fix</u>	Black cohosh 520mg and soya bean 16 g	Take 1 tablet daily
<u>Nature's own meno care</u>	Vitamin B1, B2,B3,B6, folic acid, schizandra and Hops	Take 1 tablet daily
<u>Nature's way menopause day/night</u>	Soya bean, black cohosh, dong quai, red clover, wild yam, soya bean, chaste tree magnesium and valerian.	Take 1 daily
<u>Naturopathica menoEze forte</u>	Red clover, black cohosh, dong quai, panax ginseng, liquorice, wild yam, soya bean, chaste tree and sage.	Take 1 tablet daily

Where else can I go to get help?

There are a few resources that may be helpful; Australian Menopause Society or Menopause Centre of Australia

❖ OSTEOPOROSIS

This is a condition where bones become brittle and porous and therefore more likely to break easily. It is more common in women than men especially after menopause, it can occur when on certain medications or having certain medical conditions, as well as being of low body weight or an extremely high body weight.

How can I prevent Osteoporosis?

You need to have sufficient calcium and vitamin D levels in your body. Regular blood tests are recommended to assess your levels and it may be advisable to have a bone density scan so that you can track the health of your bones.

You should aim for 3-5 serves of Calcium per day and these can be found in; yoghurt, milk, cheese, tofu, soy, broccoli, cabbage, chickpeas, almonds and cereals. If you do require supplementation, Vitamin D is active in the D3 form, whereas the D2 form needs to be converted into the active D3 form. Small amounts of D2 can be found in herring, eggs, mackerel and liver. However, Vitamin D3 is obtained through sunlight. On average people need 6 to 8 minutes per day of sunlight before 10am and after 2pm; but this does depend on your skin colour and other factors.

As well as this, you should try to limit the consumption of caffeine and alcohol which can leach calcium out of bones. Doing weight bearing exercises such as light weights can help increase the strength of bones.

How can I treat Osteoporosis over-the-counter?

There is no 'treatment' over-the-counter as they all require a prescription from your doctor and regular blood tests and monitoring to minimise the possible harm and progress of the condition.

However you can try to maintain bone health through adequate Calcium intake and Vitamin D supplementation if suitable for you. Below are the daily recommended amounts of each in men and women;

	<u>MEN 19-70 and WOMEN 19-50</u>	<u>MEN > 70 and WOMEN >50</u>
<u>CALCIUM</u>	1000mg per day	1300mg per day
	<u>MEN AND WOMEN < 70</u>	<u>MEN AND WOMEN > 70</u>
<u>VITAMIN D</u>	600 IU per day	800 IU per day

What products are available OTC to treat osteoporosis?

There are various combinations of calcium and vitamin D that are available in products in pharmacies or health food stores. It depends on the dosage that you require of each; so there's no real one product being better than the next. The only other consideration is that Calcium is available in different salt forms; and the Citrate salt is absorbed better and has less stomach related side effects including constipation. The Carbonate form is absorbed less; but the stomach related side effects may be reduced by taking the tablets with food and drinking plenty of water.

PRODUCT	INGREDIENTS	DOSAGE	COMMENTS
CITRACAL	Calcium Citrate 600mg	1-2 tablets daily	Absorbed well in the citrate form, so less stomach side effects
CITRACAL + D	Calcium Citrate 600mg + Vitamin D3 400IU	1-2 tablets daily	Absorbed well in the citrate form, so less stomach side effects plus the benefits of D3
CALTRATE	Calcium Carbonate 600mg	1-2 tablets daily	
CALTRATE + D	Calcium Carbonate 600mg + Vitamin D3 500IU	1-2 tablets daily	
CALTRATE PLUS	Calcium Carbonate 600mg, Vit D3 500IU, Magnesium, Zinc, Copper and Manganese	Take 1-2 tablets daily	Contains extra minerals to improve bone strength and vitality
ETHICAL NUTRIENTS BONE BUILDER	Equivalent to 366.5mg Calcium, Phosphorus 120mg, Boron 1mg, Vitamin K 27mcg, Vitamin D3 333.3IU	1 three times a day	Part of the calcium is in the form of hydroxyapatite which is well absorbed and has less stomach side effects
OSTELIN	Vitamin D3 1000 IU	1 daily	Gel caps which are easy to swallow and quite small
OSTEVIT D	Vitamin D3 1000 IU + Calcium Carbonate 600mg	1-2 tablets daily	High strength vitamin D and Calcium

HINTS AND TIPS:

- ✓ It is vital to do weight-bearing exercises such as squats and light weight-lifting can improve the strength of your bones.
- ✓ Consume the daily recommended amounts of vitamin D and Calcium levels through diet, getting enough sunlight or through supplementation
- ✓ Eat a well-balanced diet from the food pyramid
- ✓ Visit [Osteoporosis Australia](#) which has very useful information about maintaining optimal bone health

❖ **ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION AND/OR LOW LIBIDO**

Many men at certain times in their lives will suffer from erectile dysfunction. It is always advisable to go to the doctor to discuss the cause and long term management and treatment of this condition. Such discussions can be embarrassing and awkward but they need not be; your doctor is there to help you not to pass any judgement. Once you have ascertained the cause of the problem you will find your relationship with your partner will improve and it will be well worth the discussion.

What causes erectile dysfunction?

There are a number of factors that may contribute to the inability to obtain and/or maintain an erection;

- x heart disease
- x diabetes
- x smoking
- x alcohol
- x obesity
- x hormone insufficiencies
- x drug side effects
- x emotions (anxiety or depression)

Obviously everyone is different and even though they may have one or more of these risk factors it does not necessarily mean that you will suffer from erectile dysfunction. There are a few products available OTC to improve your libido and possibly improve your stamina and endurance during intimate times with your partner. I would recommend discussing this with your doctor first, because as a general rule you should not take these if you suffer from any heart conditions or take any medication that thins your blood; it's best to get the once over from your doctor first.

PRODUCT	INGREDIENTS	COMMENTS
*Xcitement PLUS (unisex)	Horny goat weed 3G Tribulus 5G Muir puama Panax ginseng 1G Avena Sativa 1G Zinc 15 mg	-aphrodisiac -aphrodisiac and a tonic to > energy -increase libido and sexual function -increases libido and stamina -calming and rejuvenating -antioxidant and healthy reproduction
*ErectOMax	Fenugreek Testofen Panax Ginseng Stinging nettle Avena sativa Magnesium Zinc Vitamin B6	-maintains normal testosterone levels -increases physical performance -calming and rejuvenating -muscle relaxant -maintains healthy testosterone levels -maintains healthy testosterone levels
*Male Mojo	Tribulus 2.5G	-aphrodisiac and maintains test levels

	Panax ginseng 1.5G Damiana 2G Withania 1.5G Tyrosine 500mg Fenugreek testofen 3G Tribulus 2.5G	-aphrodisiac -increases sex drive -precursor to dopamine for mood
*Clymax (for women)	Korean ginseng 1.35G Siberian ginseng 2G Cnidium 500mg Tribulus 2.5G Damiana 1G Testofen 2.5G	-increases physical performance and libido -increases endurance -increases sexual performance and libido -aphrodisiac and tonic -aphrodisiac and increases mood -maintains testosterone levels
Naturopathica Horny Goat Weed for him	Vitamin B1,2,3,6,12 Magnesium, zinc, copper, folic acid, inositol, bioflavonoids. Horny goat Week 3G Tribulus 3G Panax ginseng Siberian ginseng Gingko Guarana	-increases stamina, energy and mood -muscle relaxant, antioxidants to help -well known aphrodisiac and can increase blood flow -increases endurance and physical performance -increases endurance and physical performance -increases blood flow -increases energy and stamina
Naturopathica Horny Goat Weed for her	Vitamin B1,2,3,6,12 Magnesium, zinc, copper, folic acid, inositol, bioflavonoids. Horny goat Week 2G Tribulus 1G Panax ginseng Siberian ginseng Gingko Guarana	-increases stamina, energy and mood -muscle relaxant, antioxidants to help -well known aphrodisiac and can increase blood flow -increases endurance and physical performance -increases endurance and physical performance -increases blood flow -increases energy and stamina

*Caruso's Natural Health branded products

Apart from these products what else would you recommend to improve my libido?

The most important thing would have to be to relax! Sometimes people get so worried and anxious about their inability to perform that this stress in itself will result in it occurring...or not occurring. Just enjoy the process and learn to find relaxation techniques that suit you; some people find warm baths, or a long walk, meditation, yoga or Pilates helpful in calming the nerves and possibly releasing the tension. Although cliché, don't focus on the result...go in to enjoy the process

Exercise in general can improve circulation and increase the endorphins to help you feel good about yourself. If you are carrying some extra weight this may help you shift a few kilo's and inadvertently help the whole situation out! It also is a good stress relief for some people and may take the pressure and expectation of intercourse giving you the same result.

If you can, try to cut down smoking as this can impede circulation and reduce activity in the bedroom. Not only will you smell better, your endurance may be at its peak and things may slowly start to pick up...pardon the pun!

Some people alcohol can help relax them and get them in the mood, but for other's the relaxant effect affects the whole body and may lead to no activity. If it is impeding your performance, then try to limit if not completely cut out alcohol. Not only may it help the situation, you may lose a few extra kilo's and not retain so much water, and ultimately feel a lot more energetic in the bedroom.

Another factor could be if you are suffering from depression. When you are feeling down, then it is natural not to feel sexual or 'in the mood' but rather than fight it and end up feeling worse about the situation, try to treat the feelings of depression. If you have a close friend or sibling to talk to and work through any issues that you may be having it really could help. If not, your GP is always there to listen without judgement and they may have excellent contacts to refer you onto. The most important thing is not to ignore your feelings and think 'you'll get over it'; spend the time to work through it and address the situation. Another good independent resource is Beyond Blue; www.beyondblue.org.au. Not only is it non-judgemental and simple to use, it contains excellent information and suggestions as to survive it.

If you don't have any of the risk factors and are not feeling stressed out or can attribute a low libido or erectile dysfunction to anything in particular; then it really is a good idea to visit your doctor. It might be a good opportunity to get the 'once over' and have a blood test taken, which may show a medical reason for this occurrence. Not only will it allow you to fix the cause once and for-all, it will save you a lot of stress and angst within yourself and your relationship with your partner.

❖ OEDEMA

What is oedema?

This is fluid retention that can occur in the extremities such as hands and feet/lower legs. It can be caused by various factors such as poor kidney function, heart conditions, uncontrolled blood pressure, poor circulation, excess salt intake, alcohol and can occur after flying due to the pooling of blood as a result of low movement and pressure changes.

A lot of people come into pharmacies asking for fluid tablets, and although there are mild natural products that may provide some relief; I normally always suggest they go to a doctor to get a full assessment to find the cause of the problem as it may be an early sign of a condition that needs to be managed and controlled and I don't like taking this symptom lightly.

What do you suggest for fluid retention?

It is a good idea to elevate your legs above heart level for at least 30 minutes per day as this may improve blood flow. Wearing graduated compression stockings may also assist in the swelling and helping blood not to pool in the legs and feet area; rather circulate throughout the rest of the body.

It is important to drink plenty of water, at least 6-8 glasses per day unless you have a pre-existing heart condition that does not allow you to do so. Although it sounds contradictory, it works to flush out all the toxins from the kidney and push extra fluid through. Avoid alcohol intake and minimise salt, as these both increase fluid retention in the extremities.

It is important to check and monitor your blood pressure as it may be an indication of uncontrolled blood pressure and if it is higher than 'normal' (varies depending upon pre-existing conditions) then you must see your doctor. If you have any signs of blood clots in the leg, you must go to the hospital immediately. Signs can include; pain in a specific area, heat, redness and swelling.

What products are available OTC to aid fluid retention?

The mild natural products available that may assist in the fluid retention by acting as diuretics include;

- Vitamin B6
- B-Complex (or B6 supplemented alone)
- Dandelion
- Celery
- Stone Breaker
- Juniper

✓ There is **CARUSO'S NATURAL HEALTH FLUID AWAY** that is on the market for fluid retention and contains:

- Stone Breaker (Ayurvedic herb that can act as a diuretic)
- Dandelion (diuretic)
- Celery Seed (diuretic)
- Vitamin B6

✓ There is also a Nature's Own and Blooms brand of Celery and Juniper that works to reduce fluid retention.

The important thing to note is that if you do suffer from any disorders of the kidney, currently take diuretics and some blood pressure medication then these products should not be used. If you take any medication, consult with your doctor, pharmacist or naturopath before starting any OTC medications...or you may end up worse than before taking them!

❖ **GOUT**

What is Gout?

Gout is the accumulation of high uric acid levels in the blood and is seen by red, hot, swollen, painful and inflamed large joints most commonly in the big toe. It can occur by eating too much protein and alcohol and the body cannot clear the excess uric acid so it ends up crystallising in the affected area and becomes very painful!

How do you treat Gout OTC?

Obviously medications that work to reduce uric acid production and increase its clearance is on prescription from your doctor. So, over-the-counter treatments involve taking anti-inflammatories such as Voltaren Rapid or Nurofen with food every 4 to 6 hours to reduce the inflammation and pain.

If this has not reduced the pain alone, then consider possibly adding extra pain relievers such as:

1. Panadol (Paracetamol 500mg) every 4 to 6 hours *or if this is insufficient*;
2. Panadol Osteo (Paracetamol 665mg) every 6 to 8 hours *or if this is insufficient*;
3. Panadeine (Paracetamol 500mg + Codeine 8mg) every 4 to 6 hours *or if this is insufficient*
4. Panadeine Extra (paracetamol 500mg + Codeine 15mg) every 4 to 6 hours.

Complementary medication, although 'controversial' may provide some relief in the pain and inflammation:

- ✓ Fish oil or Krill oil may assist in being anti-inflammatories; but care is needed if currently taking anti-inflammatories as it may thin the blood significantly especially if already taking blood-thinning medication.
- ✓ Magnesium may work to be a muscle relaxant and reduce pain and cramping associated with it
- ✓ Celery is an anti-inflammatory and a diuretic
- ✓ Juniper is a diuretic

Other ways to reduce an attack or preventing one from reoccurring is to avoid protein rich foods such as red meat, anchovies, shellfish, mushrooms, and mussels. It is advisable to avoid alcohol and drink 6-8 glasses of water each day to flush the kidneys and system out completely. It has been found that losing weight may also help to reduce the recurrence of gout; so consider eating a well-balanced diet and avoid any known triggers that affect you individually. If you experience 3 or more attacks, then discuss long-term uric acid reducing medications with your doctor as it may increase your productivity.

❖ ECZEMA/DERMATITIS

Dermatitis is the inflammation of the outer layer of skin and eczema is a form of dermatitis. Therefore, these terms are often used interchangeably.

Eczema is a reaction on the skin that is characterised by redness, inflammation, itching, drying/flaking of the skin that can end up resulting in bleeding and discharge. It can affect any part of the body including the scalp but most commonly occurs in the folds of the skin such as behind the knees and elbows.

What is Eczema caused by?

As most skin conditions, eczema also is caused by a variety of factors each individual to every person affected. There is also extensive debate as to the exact causes which can make diagnosis and therefore treatment rather complex.

The most common causes appear to be;

- ✓ Allergy based reaction that can have a hereditary component. To find the exact allergen consider keeping a diary and noting what triggers may be affecting the skin. It is a good idea to trial an elimination 'diet' of both foods and lifestyle triggers for at least 4 to 6 weeks to assess if avoiding them has improved the quality of your skin. Consult your doctor if you cannot find the cause and they can order an allergy-skin-test, where they test the most common allergens and check the reaction your skin has. It eliminates the 'guess' work and can save valuable time and energy.
- ✓ Irritant based reaction caused by exposure to:
 - Soaps
 - Detergents
 - Bleach
 - Jewellery
 - Chemicals
 - Cosmetics
 - Fragrances/additives/preservatives
- ✓ Sunlight exposure; some people it can flare-up and worsen their eczema.
- ✓ Diet: although contentious, certain foods (dairy, eggs or gluten)/additives/preservatives may trigger a flare-up of eczema. There is also some evidence to suggest that a deficiency in Vitamin b3 (niacin) may cause eczema.

How do you treat Eczema?

As with most conditions, the best way to treat eczema is to remove the cause/trigger of it immediately. It can be difficult to ascertain the exact causes and ideally it requires a full assessment by your doctor. The reason I have included Eczema in the Natural Health portion, is that I believe there are some supplements can have a positive impact on the treatment outcome. I have seen so many people who have tried every steroid cream, oatmeal cream, soap substitutes and moisturisers but only had respite after adding natural health products into their regime.

The first product that I would recommend is Fish Oil. It does not matter if it is in liquid or capsule form; but it acts as an anti-inflammatory to reduce the redness, swelling and itching of eczema. It also helps lubricate and soften the scales of the skin which can be particularly useful in very dry and scaly forms. I would suggest taking the dose according to the age and weight specifications for at least 4 to 6 weeks to gage the full extent of its effects. I normally recommend Ethical Nutrients High Strength Fish Oil Liquid; because it is concentrated a much smaller dose is required, and this is excellent for fussy children or ultra-fussy adults like me!

The second natural product I would recommend in eczema is a probiotic. Probiotics are 'good bacteria' and by restoring this in the gut, it can help in the digestion and utilisation of food which instead of reacting in the form of inflammation to a food allergen, it allows the nutrients to be absorbed and utilised the way it was intended. There are several types of probiotics and they all have their benefits which you can consider in your choice, however I always recommend the Ethical Nutrients brand as they contain live bacteria and have specially patented strains that appear to be effective;

BRAND	INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS	COMMENTS
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<u>Ethical Nutrients Inner Health Plus</u>	<u>Lactobacillus acidophilus</u> NCFM 12.5 billion <u>Bifidobacterium lactus</u> Bi-07 organisms 12.5 billion	Take 1 capsule daily	This is a broad-spectrum probiotic and may assist in reducing the incidence of eczema
<u>Ethical Nutrients Eczema Shield</u>	<u>Lactobacillus rhamnosus</u> LGG organisms: 20 billion	Mothers: 1 teaspoon daily for the last 2 months of pregnancy and throughout breastfeeding <u>Formula-fed babies</u> : 0.5 teaspoon daily	This may reduce the incidence and symptoms of eczema in children
<u>Ethical Nutrients Eczema Relief</u>	<u>Lactobacillus rhamnosus</u> LGG organisms: 10 billion	Adults: 2 daily Children: 1 daily	This can reduce the symptoms of itching and sleeplessness

❖ **HAIR LOSS**

Hair loss can occur in both men and women for many different reasons;

Functional alopecia: occurs due to hormone reasons, genetic or an underlying health condition.

Traction alopecia: occurs due to friction on hair that causes it to fall out, i.e. straightening products or brushing excessively. Treatment would be to reduce heat, the use of products and eliminate pulling by brushing etc.

How do you treat functional alopecia?

Obviously, if it is caused by a hormone insufficiency then you must be assessed by your GP who most likely will give you a blood test and prescribe hormones to correct the imbalance.

However, products available OTC in pharmacy to treat this condition work by increased vasodilation, which can enlarge the hair follicle and possibly increase the duration of the hair growth phase. Continuous treatment is required to maintain the response that is achieved and response may take up to 4 months of regular treatment; so be patient! If however, there is no benefit after 12 months of continued use then it is best to stop treatment because it won't do much more after this time!

MINOXIDIL:

Apply 1 mL twice a day to the affected area

- *Rogaine for Men regular strength 2%
- *Rogaine for Women 2%
- *Rogaine for Men Extra strength 5%
- *Hair-A-Gain 5%

What natural products are available to stop my hair loss?

There are varying studies of complementary medications producing results in hair loss and although I am not going to 'investigate' all the claims, below is a list of products that may assist in reducing your hair from falling out;

- ✓ Essential fatty acids in flaxseed and evening primrose oil can help to improve the strength of the hair
- ✓ Antioxidants such as vitamin A, C, E, zinc, CoQ10 and green tea may assist in the integrity of the hair follicle.
- ✓ Ginkgo may assist in the circulation and assist in reducing hair loss
- ✓ B-group vitamins if you are deficient in these it can result in hair loss or brittle and weak hair

What supplements would you recommend for healthy Hair, skin and nails?

Apart from the abovementioned ingredients, there are various products that are marketed for 'Hair, Skin and Nails' and claim to improve the strength and vitality of these protein structures. The table below illustrates the common brands that may assist and their ingredients.

BRAND	INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS	COMMENTS
Blackmore's Hair, Skin and Nails	Silica: 25mg, horsetail: 466mg, vit C: 30mg, folic acid: 150mcg, B5:20mg, Iron: 3mg, zinc: 7.5mg, manganese: 1mg, biotin: 1.3mg, betacarotene: 1mg	1 twice a day	
Blackmore's Silica compound	Sodium: 200mg, silicon: 11.7mg	1 three times a day	
Blackmore's Skin Support	Echinacea: 500mg, calendula: 250mg, zinc: 15mg, betacarotene: 750mg	2 daily	
Nature's Own Hair, Skin and Nails	45 ingredients	1 twice daily	
Bioglan Daily repair hair, skin and nails	12 ingredients, Selenium, silica, vit E and beta-carotene	1 daily	

Cenovis Once daily multi + Hair	43 ingredients; Contains amino acids, iron, b vitamins, zinc and A and E	1 twice daily	
Ethical Nutrients healthy hair, skin and nails	Kelp, silica 107mg, zinc 15mg, vitamin E 15 IU, born and beta-carotene. 10 ingredients in total	1 daily	

❖ **PMS (PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME)**

What is PMS?

This is the 'condition' or symptoms that occur generally 1 to 2 weeks before you start menstruating and usually stop as soon as your period begins. Every person has differing symptoms to the next person and they can even change throughout your lifetime...depending on how lucky you are!

What are the most common symptoms of PMS?

Symptoms can one or more or even all of the following;

- × Bloating, fluid retention and cramping
- × Acne
- × Swollen, tender and sore breasts
- × Fatigue and/or trouble sleeping
- × Diarrhoea or constipation
- × Increased or decreased appetite
- × Irritability, tension, mood swings, feelings of anxiety and/or depression
- × Backache
- × Headaches and migraines can be triggered by hormone changes

How can I treat these symptoms?

Most recommendations are advisable for anyone to achieve a healthy lifestyle and making small changes can truly produce excellent results in your feelings of energy and well-being.

Firstly, it is a good idea to reduce caffeine and alcohol as these can increase fluid retention and bloating that occurs. They can both interfere with your natural sleep patterns and possibly cause fatigue and irritability. It is best to avoid salt, excess sugars and refined foods as these may contribute to fluid retention and they are not healthy at the best of times anyway! Instead, adopt a balanced diet using the trusted food pyramid and make sure you get sufficient fruits, vegetables, protein, carbohydrates in the form of whole grains and legumes and a small amounts of healthy fats such as those in almonds or avocados.

Exercise can help to increase circulation, act as a stress relief and release endorphins to help you feel good and think more clearly. Drinking lots of water can help to flush out excess fluid and possibly help if you have constipation and possibly improve your skin.

Try to adopt some relaxation techniques that suit you and make you feel calm and invigorated. It could be yoga, meditation, Pilates or journaling. Try one thing at a time until you find what you love; for me it is running and journaling; without these I would be chasing my tail!

For severe cramping and inflammation, then anti-inflammatories can help to reduce both. They must be taken with food and if bleeding is severe, then Ponstan can reduce the degree of bleeding and may be of benefit.

*Nurofen/Advil: (Ibuprofen 200mg or 400mg)

*Voltaren Rapid: (Diclofenac 12.5mg or 25mg)

*Naproxen: (Naproxen 225mg)

*Ponstan: (Mefenamic Acid 250mg)

If you require further pain relief on top of taking anti-inflammatories; consider plain Paracetamol 500mg or 665mg as they will be gentle on the stomach and be non-drowsy options. If you do require pain relief for bedtime; consider Panadeine (Paracetamol 500mg + Codeine 9mg) or Panadeine Extra (Paracetamol 500mg + Codeine 15mg) or Mersyndol Night (Paracetamol 450mg, Codeine 9.75mg + Doxylamine 5mg)

What products are available for PMS?

The following can help symptoms and the products available commercially contain some or all of these ingredients;

- ✓ Folic Acid 400micrograms: B-group vitamin to reduce fluid retention and improve mood
- ✓ Calcium and Vitamin D:
- ✓ Magnesium 400mg: Act as a muscle relaxant and reduce cramping and aches
- ✓ Vitamin B6: Excellent for fluid retention and good for improving mood
- ✓ Vitamin E 400IU:
- ✓ Evening Primrose Oil: Act as an anti-inflammatory and reduce pain

- ✓ Fish Oil: acts as an anti-inflammatory
- ✓ St John's Wort: Improve symptoms of depression and anxiety
- ✓ Dandelion, Celery, Juniper: Act as diuretics to reduce fluid retention
- ✓ Chasteberry (vitex agnus-castus): this is a herb that seems to regulate and reduce the symptoms of PMS
- ✓ Black Cohosh: has similar effects to oestrogen to help balance hormone levels

Some products are listed below:

BRAND	INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS	COMMENTS
<u>Swisse Ultiboost Mood</u>	B6, B12, folic acid, tyrosine., phenylalanine, St John's Wort, Ginseng, Gingko and Schizandra	1-2 daily	
<u>Blackmore's Evening Primrose Oil</u>	EPO: 1G which has 100mg GLA	1-3 daily	
<u>Blackmore's Vitex agnus-catus</u>	Chaste tree: 660mg	1 three times daily	
<u>Ethical Nutrients Primrose, fish oil and Vitamin E</u>	Fish oil 500mg which has EPA 90mg and DHA 60mg Evening primrose oil 500mg which has GLA 50mg Vitamin E 50IU	4 three times a day	
<u>Ethical Nutrients Mega Magnesium:</u>	Magnesium 200mg, zinc, B6, chromium, selenium.	1-2 daily	
<u>Ethical Nutrients PMS relief</u>	Chaste tree 1G, zizyphus 1G, B6 25mg, chromium	1 twice a day	
<u>Nature's Own PMS Essentials</u>	Vitex agnus castus, black cohosh, withania, B6, magnesium	1 daily	

When should I see my doctor?

If you suffer from severe depression or anxiety, then it is really important that you seek support from your GP. Over-the-counter medication may not help you in severe cases as it may be a sign of PMD. Also if you have severe bleeding, irregular cycle or any changes in the symptoms that you 'normally' experience then it is advisable to discuss these with your doctor.

❖ ENERGY

What is a lack of energy caused by?

There are lots of reasons that you may feel lethargic and depleted on a daily basis. If you are consistently feeling this way, then consider discussing this with your doctor and you may require a blood test for further investigation.

It can be commonly caused by the following factors;

- × Dehydration; can make you feel cloudy and lethargic. Aim for at least 6 to 8 glasses of water per day
- × Too much caffeine can cause a reduction in iron absorption plus keep you awake at night to disturb your sleep
- × Alcohol consumption; can cause dehydration and interfere with normal sleep patterns
- × Too much or too little sleep; both can make you feel tired. Aim for at least 7-8 hours of sleep per night and try to sleep and wake up at consistent times even on the weekend to train your body into a natural 'rhythm'
- × Anaemia and/or pregnancy; both can be seen in a blood test
- × Insufficient nutrients; B-group vitamins, potassium and magnesium. As well as complex carbohydrates can help regulate blood sugar levels and help you maintain stamina and endurance. Sufficient protein will support the strength of muscle activity and reduce weakness
- × Exercise; too much or too little can either make you too active or lazy
- × Medical conditions; depression, thyroid conditions, sleep apnoea or diabetes
- × Certain medications can cause tiredness; certain pain medications, anti-depressants or anti-histamines.
- × Napping through the day can interrupt your normal sleep cycle and not allow for a restful sleep through the night

What products are available to increase my energy?

As a general rule the following can act to increase energy; however if you are already consuming a balanced diet then supplementing with additional products should not be required.

- ✓ B-Group vitamins: improves endurance, stamina as well as mood
- ✓ Ginseng: combats weakness and provides extra energy
- ✓ Gingko: can improve circulation and improve focus
- ✓ Guarana: contains caffeine so it increases focus and energy levels
- ✓ Ginseng: traditionally is used to increase energy and well-being
- ✓ Spirulina: contains iron, B12 and high protein to increase energy and stamina

Some products include;

BRAND	INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS	COMMENTS
<u>Berocca Performance</u>	Vitamin C: 500mg, B1: 15mg, B2: 15mg, B3: 50mg, B6: 10mg, B12: 10mcg, B5: 23mg, Biotin: 150mcg, Folic acid: 400mcg, Calcium: 100mg, Magnesium: 100mg, Zinc: 10mg	1 daily	
<u>Berocca Boost</u>	Vitamin C: 60mg, B1:1.4mg, B2:1.6mg, B3:1mg ,B6: 2mg, B12:1mcg , B5:6mg, Biotin:150mcg , Folic acid:200mcg , Calcium:100mg , Magnesium: 100mg , Guarana: 222.2mg	1 daily	
<u>Berocca Focus 50 +</u>	Vitamin C: 500mg, B1: 15mg, B2: 15mg, B3: 50mg, B6: 10mg, B12: 10mcg, B5: 23mg, Biotin: 150mcg, Folic acid: 400mcg, Calcium: 100mg, Magnesium: 100mg, Zinc: 10mg and Ginseng: 50mg	1 daily	
<u>Hairy Lemon</u>	Vitamin C: 250mg, B1: 15mg, B2: 20mg, B3: 50mg, B6: 10mg, B12: 10mcg, B5: 22.5mg, Biotin: 150mcg, Siberian Ginseng: 200mg, Guarana: 160mg	1 daily	
<u>Swisse Ultivite + Energy</u>	B group vitamins, zinc, Vit C, Calcium, Magnesium. Dissolves so good quickly	1 daily	
<u>Blackmore's Mega B complex</u>	B1: 50mg, B2: 30mg, B3: 100mg, B5: 50mg, B6: 50mg, B12: 50mcg, choline: 50mg, biotin: 50mcg, inositol, folic acid: 300mcg	1 daily	
<u>Ethical Nutrients Ginseng 5 Exhaustion relieved</u>	5 types of ginseng: Korean, Siberian, Indian, Chinese and American	1 twice a day	
<u>Ethical Nutrients Super B Daily Stress +</u>	High strength vitamin B	1 twice a day	
<u>Cenovis Guarana 2000 + Ginseng 500mg</u>	2000mg guarana, 500mg ginseng	1 daily	
<u>Cenovis Mega B</u>	11 ingredients	1 daily	
<u>Nature's Own Super B complex</u>		1 daily	
<u>Bioglan Mega B</u>	b-group vitamins	1 daily	
<u>Spirulina</u>			

❖ **SLEEPING DIFFICULTIES/INSOMNIA**

What commonly causes sleep disturbance?

Some people can have trouble either falling asleep or staying asleep and this can occur very rarely or happen more frequently in others. It can occur for a few reasons such as; stress/worrying that does not allow you to switch off, travelling; time difference can play havoc with your system, consuming alcohol/tea/coffee or cigarettes before bed can all keep you awake, consuming too much fluid so you wake in the night to go to the bathroom and cannot get back to sleep. It can be caused by certain medications, certain medical conditions; restless legs syndrome, sleep apnoea or thyroid problems.

What can I try to do to improve my symptoms?

The main strategies that you can try and improve include the following;

- ✓ Avoid caffeine in tea, coffee, soft drinks and chocolate as well as cigarette smoking, alcohol and excess fluid intake after 3 pm so that they do not keep you awake.
- ✓ Avoid watching TV or looking at the computer at least 1-2 hours before bedtime as the bright lights tend to 'stimulate'
- ✓ Try not to have naps throughout the day as this can play havoc with your normal sleep patterns
- ✓ Try and go to sleep and wake up at the same times each day, even on weekends to train your body
- ✓ Learn some relaxation techniques; journal, meditate do affirmations before bed to calm the mind of any unnecessary thoughts; but avoid vigorous exercise before bed as it will 'stimulate' you
- ✓ Remove the clock in your room; not only will the noise or lights disturb you, it is so easy to focus on the time when you know you aren't falling asleep; recipe for disaster!
- ✓ Consider taking a warm relaxing bath before bed; this can really calm the nerves and be a good soothing wind-down method

What natural products exist over-the-counter to treat my symptoms?

Natural products tend to be less habit forming than some other over-the-counter medications available in pharmacy so is a good option if you recurrently have these symptoms. There is no 'one' better product than the next, it may be a matter of trial and error until you find the right product to suit you. Below is a quick list of ingredients that may help you, and then the table illustrates the main commercially available products.

- ✓ Melatonin
- ✓ Magnesium
- ✓ Skull Cap
- ✓ Valerian
- ✓ B-vitamins
- ✓ Schizandra
- ✓ Zizyphus

BRAND	INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS	COMMENTS
Bioglan Melatonin	Melatonin	1-3 night	
<u>Swisse Ultiboost Sleep</u>	Magnesium 6.4mg, Hops, Valerian 1.3G and liquorice	1-2 tablet 30 minutes to 1 hour before bed	
<u>Swisse Ultiboost relax and sleep</u>	Hops 500mg, Passionflower 1.5G, Lemon Balm 750mg, Magnesium	2 tablets 1 hour before bed	
<u>Blackmore's Sleep sound relief</u>	Valerian: 1.2G, lemon balm: 825mg, magnesium: 55mg	2 tablets 30 minutes before bed	
<u>Blackmore's Tranquil night</u>	Lavender: 600mg, HOPS: 250mg, oats: 250mg	2 tablets 30 minutes before sleep	
<u>Ethical nutrients sleep enhance</u>	Chinese ginseng. Reduces the time to fall asleep and increases the duration of it	2 tablets 30 minutes before sleep	
<u>Cenovis Easy sleep valerian 2000mg</u>	2000mg valerian	2 tablets 30 minutes before sleep	
<u>Nature's own Complete Sleep</u>	Lactium and zizyphus	2 tablets 30 minutes before sleep	
<u>Nature's Own Complete sleep hot drink</u>	Lemon balm, chamomile, lactium	2-3 teaspoons into 200mL warm milk 30 to 60 seconds before bed	
<u>Nature's own Valerian forte</u>	2000mg valerian	1 tablet 30 minutes before bed	
<u>Bioglan Sleep well</u>	melatonin, cofea Arabica, ataphysagria		

❖ **MOOD, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION**

What commonly causes depression and anxiety?

Approximately 3 million Australians suffer from depression and anxiety; and although not everyone will suffer the same way or symptoms; but that is a lot of people. I have seen lots of people come into the pharmacy searching for help in this area; but it can be quite complex depending upon the cause, symptoms and what you have tried in the past.

It appears that symptoms can be caused by many factors;

- × Combination of recent events coupled alongside previous experiences
- × Family history; may be a genetic component to this
- × Certain personality types; those that are naturally more self-critical or have a low self-esteem
- × Can be caused by a medical condition such as a thyroid insufficiency
- × It can be caused by the use of drugs and alcohol
- × Possible changes to chemicals in the brain may cause symptoms

When should I see my doctor?

Some people may suffer from mild symptoms and can learn techniques to manage their symptoms when they arise. However, anything more severe really warrants seeing your GP to discuss long-term management and treatment options to be able to live with as much freedom as possible. I personally believe that treatment should be multifaceted and involve behavioural options as well as medications.

There are some wonderful tools of information and support networks that are available. We are very blessed in Australia to have places to call, so if you are currently suffering or are worried about a relative or friend then try to direct them to these point of contacts; you may even save their life;

- ✓ Beyond Blue: www.beyondblue.org.au
- ✓ Life Line: www.lifeline.org.au or 13 11 44
- ✓ Reach out Australia: www.reachout.com
- ✓ Headspace: www.headspace.org.au
- ✓ Kids Helpline: www.kidshelpline.com.au or 1800 551 800

What products are available OTC to help with my symptoms?

There are a number of herbs and vitamins that may assist in improving the mood and mild symptoms of anxiety and depression. As mentioned previously, if you feel that it is ongoing and getting worse then please seek advice from your doctor; as OTC treatments may no longer be suitable options.

- ✓ B-group vitamins: can help with mood
- ✓ Magnesium: Muscle relaxant
- ✓ Amino acids: Tyrosine, Tryptophan are precursors to certain chemicals that control mood
- ✓ St John's Wort: can improve the mood
- ✓ Homeopathic ingredients: Rescue remedy

Below are some products that are available;

BRAND	INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS	COMMENTS
Swisse Ultiboost Mood	B6, B12, folic acid, tyrosine., phenylalanine, St John's Wort, Ginseng, Gingko and Schizandra	1-2 daily	
Swisse Ultiboost Stress relief	Withania and Vitamin C 400mg	1 twice daily	
Blackmore's St Johns Wort	St John's Wort: 1.8G	1 three times daily	
Blackmore's Women's D-stress	B1: 12.5mg, B: 12.5mg, B3: 25mg, B5: 33.7mg, B6: 25mg, B12: 25mcg, C: 75mg, biotin: 37.5mg, folic acid: 150mcg, magnesium, zinc: 6mg, winter cherry: 1.5G	1 twice daily	
Ethical Nutrients Clinical strength St Johns Wort	1.35G of St Johns Wort	1 three times a day	
Ethical Nutrients Stress and anxiety relief	Lactium PURE 200mg	Stress: 1 daily Anxiety: 2 twice daily	
Cenovis Chill Pill	Rhodiola and hops	1-2 daily	
Nature's Own Mood support	St John's Wort 2000mg, Tyrosine 250mg, Glutamine 25mg, Magnesium 25mg	1 three times daily	
Bioglan SAME	SAMe and folic acid and B6, 12	1-3 daily	

❖ **MULTI-VITAMINS**

Do I need to take any multivitamins?

This is the age old question as to whether or not one needs to take multi-vitamins, and truthfully there is not hard and fast rule! Firstly, I would recommend getting a blood test from your doctor before deciding whether or not you should start taking a supplement. The reason being, is that if you have an underlying medical condition that may be affecting your energy levels then rather than 'guessing' what you are deficient in, you can correct the cause of the problem rather than mask it.

If you are eating a well-balanced diet, consuming servings from each of the major food groups as our trusted food pyramid suggests; then I would question the need for extra supplementation. The question then comes up as to the quality and freshness of the produce that you eat; if it is smothered in pesticides or has come from across the world; then perhaps some or most of the nutrients have been lost. The way we prepare our foods also can reduce the nutrient value; and although seemingly we have a healthy diet if you fry them completely it won't do anything.

If you do choose to take a multivitamin, some people do start ignoring their diet and assume they are getting benefits from the 'tablet' and choose more processed or refined foods; which ultimately is not a better outcome for your health. If you do choose to take a multivitamin, ask questions about where it is sourced from, is it natural or synthetically derived? Is it free from mercury and other harsh chemicals that you would ordinarily not put into your body? Does it contain the whole recommended daily intake amounts in each tablet; in which case if I am still attempting to eat a balanced-diet, will I be getting an overload?

These are issues raised are just some food for thought; I believe it is a good idea to review your diet and lifestyle and if you are time poor and unable to consume each of the major food groups each day, then do possibly consider adding a supplement; providing that you do get regular blood tests.

What is the difference between all the brands of multivitamins? How do I know which one to choose?

There are possibly hundreds of brands that are available on the market; and I can completely appreciate the difficulty in choosing one over the next! There is no secret though that I have found...I'm sorry to tell you! As a general rule, Swisse contains a lot more herbs than any of the other brands which may or may not be suitable to you, but it certainly does allow them to differentiate between the other commercial brands.

All I can say, is that check the products and choose the one that best suits your needs, as we are all individual at the end of the day! Check this website below, that illustrates the Australian guidelines regarding the recommended daily intake for the major vitamins through diet and/or supplementation. This may assist you in deciding whether or not you are able to fulfil these needs with your diet alone or whether or not you require assistance to meet them;

<http://www.medicalonline.com.au/medical/nutrition/rdi.htm>

❖ **COLD, FLU AND IMMUNE BOOSTERS**

What natural products are available to treat cold and flu symptoms?

There are several natural health products that can improve cold and flu symptoms, as well as boost the immune system in order to fight the infection more quickly. Studies are not conclusive in regards to the efficacy of such products; however they have been traditionally used and are still marketed for these effects even today.

Supplements that may assist in boosting your immune system include;

✓ Astragalus

- ✓ [Bee Propolis](#)
- ✓ [Echinacea](#)
- ✓ [Elderberry](#)
- ✓ [Garlic](#)
- ✓ [Ginseng](#)
- ✓ [Olive leaf extract](#)
- ✓ [Vitamin A, C and E](#)
- ✓ [Bioflavonoids](#)
- ✓ [Zinc](#)
- ✓ [Horseradish](#)

BRAND	INGREDIENTS	DIRECTIONS	COMMENTS
Swisse Ultiboost Immune	Olive leaf, zinc, magnesium, calcium, vitamin C, citrus bioflavonoids	1 twice a day	
Swisse Ultiboost horseradish, garlic + C	Horseradish 10G, Garlic 1.1G, Vitamin C 200mg	1 twice a day	
Swisse Ultiboost Wellmune	Patented ingredient Wellmune WGP to reduce upper respiratory tract symptoms in marathon runner	1 daily	
Blackmore's Cold and Flu day/Night	Echinacea: 4.2G, Eucalyptus oil, willowbark: 1.6G, Holy basil: 1.5G, Hops: 500mg (night time tablets)	1 three times daily and 1 night tablet before bed	
Blackmore's Echinacea ACE + Zinc	Echinacea: 500mg, betacarotene: 3mg, B5: 25.7mg, C: 250mg, B6, Vit E: 50IU, Zinc: 6.5mg	1 three times daily	
Blackmore's Echinacea throat lozenges	Echinacea: 500mg, vitamin C: 46.5mg, eucalyptus oil	1 every 2 to 3 hours	
Ethical Nutrients Cold and flu relief	Horseradish 2G, elderflower 2G, white flower 1G	2 three times daily. runny nose /congestion: 1 three times daily	
Ethical Nutrients Immune defence	Andrographis, Ginseng, Echinacea, zinc, vitamin	Prevention: 1 daily. Treatment: 1 twice daily	
Ethical Nutrients Sore throat relief	Marshmallow, calendula, sage, thyme, clove bud oil and peppermint oil	5 sprays every 2 hours	
Cenovis Echinacea, garlic, zinc and C	1 three times a day	vitamin C 500mg, Echinacea 1000mg, zinc 2mg, garlic: 100mg	
Nature's Own high potency vitamin C	500mg vitamin C	1 twice a day	
Nature's Own triple strength garlic, C, horseradish, fenugreek and marshmallow	900mg garlic, 500mg vitamin C, 1.5G horseradish, 50mg fenugreek 50mg marshmallow	1 twice a day	
Bioglan Airborne immunity	Garlic 2000mg, Echinacea 750mg, Olive leaf 100mg, Zinc, vitamin C and citrus bioflavonoids	2 daily for 5 to 7 days for a cold. Then 1 daily	

When should I see my doctor?

If your symptoms are recurrent, getting worse, last longer than 3-4 days, you have a fever or the symptoms are changing then it is important that you go to the doctor. It could be a sign of a bacterial infection and you may require the use of stringer and more appropriate medications. This is particularly vital in young children, pregnant and breast-feeding mothers, elderly people or those with other medical conditions. We are extremely fortunate in Australia to have an excellent medical system with doctor's that can bulk bill and having access to after-hours clinics at no extra out-of-pocket expenses in most cases.

What else can I do to treat my condition?

Make sure that you remain well hydrated by drinking at least 6-8 glasses of water each day as well as limiting tea/coffee and alcohol which can dehydrate you and delay your recovery. Ensure that you remain warm but not overheated by air-conditioners which can impede your recovery through dehydration.

Get adequate amount of sleep; at least 8 hours each night and if you can rest through the day that would be ideal. Eat a well-balanced diet with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables; making fresh soups will provide you with a water source as well as all the necessary nutrients for your health and vitality. Wash your hands with soap before eating and after coughing/blowing your nose to prevent passing it onto others. Throw out your used and old tissues ASAP and do not sneeze/cough into your hands; do it in the crease of your elbow.

❖ JOINT HEALTH/ARTHRITIS

How do you treat joint conditions such as arthritis?

Like all the other conditions, Osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis or just plain old wear and tear can be treated by many natural supplements! Clearly, it depends upon the cause of the ailment and whether or not you have other medical conditions/medications or allergies but below is a surmised list of possible options for you;

- ✓ Glucosamine: naturally found in joints and needed for the formation of cartilage
- ✓ Chondroitin: this increases the cushioning and fluidity between the joints
- ✓ Fish Oil: Acts as an anti-inflammatory and can help the lubrication between joints
- ✓ Evening primrose oil: can reduce pain and inflammation
- ✓ Krill Oil: anti-inflammatory that requires a lower dose than fish oil
- ✓ Magnesium: is a muscle relaxant and can reduce tension and tightening of muscles
- ✓ MSM: reduce inflammation and pain
- ✓ Tumeric: acts as a natural anti-inflammatory
- ✓ Celery, Juniper, Dandelion: natural diuretics to reduce inflammation in joints and fluid retention
- ✓ Green lipped mussel: reduce inflammation, pain, stiffness and improve the function of connective tissues.
- ✓ Calcium and Vitamin D: increase the strength of bones and can reduce the incidence of osteoporosis and brittle bones