

Vitamins, Minerals and Natural Medicines

Natural medicines have grown in popularity in recent years and have been shown in many cases to be very effective in treating and preventing many medical conditions.

Immune System Boost

Echinacea is used to fight off infections including bacteria, viruses and fungus. It is most commonly used to prevent and fight off colds and flus. Whelehans own brand Echinacea tablets are €6.99 per pack of 40 (33% extra free)

Garlic is also a powerful antioxidant and is great for preventing and fighting colds. Garlic is beneficial in preventing heart disease. There is some evidence it helps reduce blood pressure. Whelehans Odourless one a day Garlic Capsules are €3.95 per pack of 30.

Vitamin C is one of the most powerful of all known anti-oxidants. The damage done to cells by free radicals is acknowledged to be the cause of most age-related conditions including diabetes, high blood pressure, vision problems, Alzheimer's disease, heart disease and cancer. Antioxidants like vitamin C, E and A help prevent, lessen and sometimes reverse the damage done by free radicals.

Vitamin C is proven to boost the body's immune system and help create antibodies thus preventing illnesses like colds and flus. Vitamin C also helps the absorption of iron thus helping oxygen transport in the body so maintaining energy levels. Whelehans Vitamin C 1000mg chewable tablets have a pleasant orange flavour. They are €4.99 per pack of 40 (40 for the price of 30).

Reducing Cholesterol

Lecithin has been proven to reduce cholesterol. Lecithin reduces cholesterol by binding cholesterol and fats to water in your intestinal tract, hence reducing the absorption of cholesterol. Whelehans Lecithin 1200mg capsules are natural and are derived from soy. They are €6.99 per pack of 90.

Aiding sleep

Valerian is a herb used as a mild sedative to aid sleep. It is natural sleep aid. Whelehans Valerian tablets are €4.99 per pack of 30.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome

Peppermint oil is used to treat stomach bloating and stomach cramps. It is the best product without prescription for Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). Whelehans Peppermint oil capsules are €5.99 per pack of 30.

Benefits of fish oils

Omega 3 fish oils stimulates blood circulation, increases the breakdown of fibrin, a compound involved in clot and scar formation, and additionally has been shown to reduce blood pressure. There is strong scientific evidence that omega fatty acids reduce cholesterol levels, especially triglycerides. Regular intake reduces the risk of heart attack. Omega 3 also prevents joint pain and has been proven to help enhance serotonin in the brain so helps mood. Omega 3 supplements are beneficial if you don't eat a lot of fish. Whelehans Omega 3 supplement is €5.50 per pack of 30.

Power of probiotics

The World Health Organisation (WHO) describes probiotics as "live organisms which when administered in adequate amounts confer a health benefit on the host".

Probiotics have been proven to boost the immune system and prevent gastrointestinal problems such as bloating as well as preventing side effects from antibiotics. The high sugar content of popular probiotic yogurts and drinks available in supermarkets counteracts the benefits of the probiotics. Whelehans own brand Acidophilus Probiotic Formula is sugar free and contains 2 billion lactic bacteria from 3 strains. Whelehans own brand costs €5.99 per pack of 30, this is better value than leading brands and if you take it on an ongoing basis, our 90 pack is better value.

Preventing Side Effects of cholesterol medication

Statins are world's most prescribed drugs and are used to reduce cholesterol. Statins are so popular because heart disease is the world's second biggest cause of death after cancer. Therefore, reducing cholesterol if high will greatly reduce the risk of heart disease and death. In Ireland in 2000, heart disease was the leading cause of death being responsible for 41% of all deaths. Therefore statins have an important role in saving lives.

One issue with statins is that they reduce Co Enzyme Q10, a vital nutrient in almost every cell of the body. Reduction in the level of Co-enzyme Q10 is a reason for many of the side effects of statins. Whelehans own brand Co Enzyme Q10 contains 100mg of Co Enzyme Q10 so helps prevent side effects of statins such as:

- Headaches
- Tired aching muscles
- Muscle cramps
- General fatigue

If you currently take a statin and experience a side effect such as headache, I would advise trying Co Enzyme Q10. In Whelehans we have encountered Co Enzyme Q10 supplements stopping the side effects of statins in many people. Whelehans own brand Co Enzyme Q10 is an affordable option and unlike many Co Enzyme Q10 supplements, it only needs to be taken once daily. If you have high cholesterol, statins are very important way of prolonging your life so it is important not to give them up if possible.

The “energy” vitamins

The B vitamins are often referred to as the “energy” vitamins, mainly because they are involved in energy release in the body. There are in fact eight different B vitamins, each with a different role in the body. The eight B vitamins are Vitamin B1, B2, B3, B5, B6, B7, B9 and B12. Getting enough B vitamins will keep energy levels up, provide mental alertness, improve memory, combat aging, boost the immune system and fight against depression. Many elderly people, vegetarians or people who are on strict diets don't get enough of these important vitamins. People who are stressed, eat out often, don't have a good balanced diet with plenty of fruit and veg, or abuse alcohol can also be deficient. The B vitamins are available in Whelehans Vitamin B Complex formulation which is yeast free and is €5.49 per 30. Whelehans Traditional Tonic and Children's Tonic contain all the B vitamins as well as iron and is a good natural boost.

Cystitis and Urinary Tract infections

Cranberry treats lower urinary tract infections (also called bladder infections or cystitis). Cranberry can prevent the recurrence of urinary tract infections. Cranberry helps deodorise urine and fight E. coli and other bacteria. Cranberry juice available in supermarkets can help; however it contains a lot of sugars which bacteria can feed on. Therefore, Whelehans Cranberry Capsules are a good choice as they are sugar free. Whelehans Cranberry Capsules cost €5.99 per pack of 30. Cranberry capsules are a good choice for diabetics and those prone to recurrent urinary tract infections.

Vitamin E

Vitamin E works together with other antioxidants, such as vitamin C and selenium, to help prevent chronic illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease.

Vitamin E captured the attention of cardiologists in 1993, when a Harvard University study showed that men who took vitamin E had a 35% lower risk of heart disease than those who didn't take the supplement. These results bolstered the theory that vitamin E helps keep heart problems at bay by preventing so-called bad cholesterol (LDL) from clogging up your arteries.

Vitamin E is most commonly found in vegetable oils, nuts, fatty fish such as tuna and salmon, dark, leafy vegetables, and whole grains. Frying or cooking with a lot of oil could cause a loss of vitamin E.

If you tend to skimp on vegetables, nuts, and whole grains, you'd probably benefit from taking a vitamin E supplement. Whelehans vitamin E 400iu capsules cost €10.95 per pack of 90.

Glucosamine and Chondroitin

Glucosamine and chondroitin supplements can provide pain relief for those suffering from joint pain. These chemicals are found naturally in cartilage and it is thought that taking these supplements may improve the condition of damaged cartilage. They may also slow down thinning of the cartilage. Both are available over the counter in pharmacies, separately or in combination products. Whelehans 1500mg Glucosamine caplets cost €8.95 per month's supply. Whelehans high strength Glucosamine and Chondroitin Capsules are €9.99 for a month's supply. This is less expensive than leading brands such as Vitabiotics Jointcare[®]. Glucosamine is allowed on the medical when prescribed by a doctor (eg Dona[®], Pharma-Nord Glucosamine[®]).

Vitamin D

Your body also needs vitamin D to absorb calcium properly. Vitamin D is found in certain foods, including cod liver oil, oily fish such as sardines and herrings, margarine and egg yolks. It's also made by your skin when you're in the sunlight. The National Osteoporosis Society recommends about 20 minutes of sun exposure to the face and arms, every day during the summer, to provide you with enough vitamin D for the year. However, to reduce your risk of getting skin cancer, you should cover your skin between 11am and 3pm, and don't allow your skin to burn. Between 40 to 80 per cent of people over 65 have vitamin D deficiency in Ireland. Vitamin D deficiency also causes a mild muscle weakness and hence increases the risk of falls and hence fractures. Therefore, vitamin D supplementation is especially important in this age group.

If you are not getting enough vitamin D from your diet, Adult D[®] Capsules which are available from Whelehans Pharmacy are an excellent source of vitamin D. Adult D[®] Capsules contains 1000IU of vitamin D3 which is the easiest type of vitamin D to absorb. It is recommended by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and only costs €2.98 per month. It is not recommended to take above 4000IU of vitamin D daily but unlike vitamin A, there is no evidence that high levels of vitamin D pose any risk to health.

Calcium

Eating a diet rich in calcium is important for maintaining healthy bones. Dairy products and green leafed vegetables are good sources of calcium. Postmenopausal women with osteoporosis should aim to take 1,000mg of calcium every day, either in their diet or as a supplement. This can be obtained from 600ml of milk with either 50g of hard cheese (eg Cheddar or Edam), one pot of yogurt, or 50g of sardines. Care must be taken as many dairy products are high in fat; however the low fat versions have the exact same calcium levels as full fat versions. You should try not to drink fizzy drinks or have too much caffeine, salt or animal protein such as beef, as these can affect the balance of calcium in your body.

Eating plenty of fruit and vegetables can help to cancel out the effects of too much protein in your diet. Smoking can have a harmful effect on your bone strength and can also cause an early menopause. If you smoke, you should try to give up. You should also be careful not to drink too much alcohol. Whelehans Advanced Bone Formula contains 400mg of calcium as well as vitamin D, magnesium and vitamin K which all help strengthen bones and is €5.99 per pack of 30.

Hair, Skin and Nails

Nutritional deficiencies can contribute to increased hair loss by weakening hair shafts that cause breakage to the hair and slow re growth. Hair problems that are caused by nutritional deficiencies can be corrected by a good diet. The main nutrients involved in hair health include vitamin A, certain B vitamins, the vitamin biotin, vitamin C, copper, iron, zinc, protein, and water. Of all nutrients, biotin has the biggest impact on hair growth. It is found in food sources such as eggs and liver, however if someone has thinning or damaged hair; a biotin supplement is a good choice. Whelehans Hair, Skin and Nails formula costs €8.49 per pack of 30. Viviscal® Hair Repair is a new product on the market especially designed to help damaged and thinning hair. It restores damaged hair from the effects of over styling, heat treatments, straighteners, colouring, extensions etc. It contains a mix of vitamins and minerals important to hair and skin health, including amino acids and the scientifically developed AminoMar C which is a marine protein extract which could be to the key to solving many modern day hair problems.

Folic Acid

Folic acid is found in dark green vegetables, breakfast cereals, oranges and yeast extracts. Folic acid should be taken by women trying to conceive and for the first 12 weeks of pregnancy as it prevents spina bifida. Most people assume folic acid is only needed during pregnancy. However folic acid is important at all ages to properly form red blood cells and for our bodies to metabolise protein for energy. Folic acid and other B vitamins have been shown to fight cardiovascular disease and to help prevent Alzheimer's, osteoporosis, cancer and it helps to stabilise mental health. Whelehans folic acid 400mcg tablets are €2.95 for one month supply or €5.95 for a three month supply.

Lutein for eyes

Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is thought to affect one in ten people over the age of 55. Over 60,000 Irish people suffer from this condition in Ireland. Whelehans Lutein for Eyes includes Lutein, Zeaxanthin, bilberry and grapeseed. These ingredients are recommended to reduce the risk or slow the progression of Age Related Macular Degeneration. Whelehans Lutein for Eyes costs €9.95 per month so is better value than other brands.

Evening Primrose Oil

Relieve the discomforts of PMS (premenstrual syndrome), menstruation and endometriosis. By interfering with the production of inflammatory prostaglandins released during menstruation, the GLA in evening primrose oil can help to lessen menstrual cramps. It may also minimise premenstrual breast tenderness, irritable bowel flare-ups, and carbohydrate cravings, and help to control endometriosis-associated inflammation. It may help counter impotence and female infertility.

Evening primrose oil is also thought to ease the joint pain and swelling of rheumatoid arthritis and reduce the symptoms of the skin conditions eczema, acne and rosacea. It helps prevent diabetes-associated nerve damage and combat damage from multiple sclerosis. There is some evidence it prevents Alzheimer's-related memory deficiencies. Whelehans Evening Primrose Oil 500mg capsules cost €2.99 per pack of 30.

Nutritionist Service

Whelehans have an in-store nutritionist service with nutritionist Cathriona Hodgins. A consultation consists of in depth analysis of major body systems including liver, digestion, hormones plus personal health history, family history and review of daily diet.

For comprehensive and free health advice and information call in to Whelehans or log on to www.whelehans.ie or dial 04493 34591. Find us on Facebook.