Early Summer 2026

Elevate



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Canada Day Activities

PAGE 8



Dr. Nicole Daniels
ND

Practice: ND at Home | ndathome.ca

Focus: Family-focused naturopathic medicine and creativity therapy

Fan of: Art, nature walks, and baking

Tip: A colourful plate is a healthy plate!

On my shelf: Herbal teas, Bach flower remedies

Childhood Depression

PAGE 10



Dr. Daniella Perri
ND, CCCE

Practice: MotherWell Academy / Innisfil / Simcoe County

Focus: Postpartum healthcare

Fan of: Arts & crafts with my 3 kiddos

Tip: Add veggies for breakfast to keep you feeling satisfied until lunch!

On my shelf: Allicin

Spotlight on Vervain

PAGE 14



Mary Charteris
BScN, RN, RH

Practice: Registered nurse, registered herbalist

Focus: Digestion, immune health, and mental wellness

Fan of: Fresh fish cooked over a fire

Tip: Bare feet on the earth!

On my shelf: Lemon, ginger, sea salt, reishi

Infrared Sauna Therapy

PAGE 18



Dr. Effy Germanis
ND, R.Ac

Practice: Hygeia Naturopathic Clinic

Focus: Gut health, hormones, pain management

Fan of: 3,000+ piece puzzles

Tip: Enjoy your meals and chew your food!

On my shelf: Business and mindset books

Fatty Liver & Your Family

PAGE 22



Dr. Danielle Essel
ND

Practice: Body and Me / bodyandme.ca

Focus: Pediatrics and reproductive health

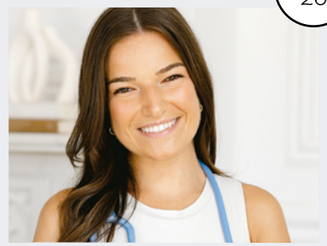
Fan of: Long nature walks

Tip: Let your bright light shine!

On my shelf: Crystals, science books, plants

Pregnancy Constipation

PAGE 26



Dr. Domenique Barbaro
ND

Practice: drdomeniquend.com

Focus: Pediatrics, women's and perinatal health

Fan of: Reading, cooking, yoga

Tip: Sleep well, nourish your body, and do what you love!

On my shelf: Ginger

Pregnancy Chiropractic

PAGE 30



Dr. Daina Patel
BSc, DC

Practice: Dr. Daina Patel, DC, Toronto drdainapatel.com

Focus: Chronic pain, wellness, and prevention

Fan of: Yoga and meditation

Tip: Movement is medicine!

On my shelf: Magnesium, lavender oil

Clean Beauty Ingredients

PAGE 34



Jennifer Freitas

Practice: Entrepreneur and creative project manager

Focus: Passion, intention, and consciousness

Fan of: Integrity, nature, friendship, music, reading

Tip: Live each moment fully!

On my shelf: Skincare, perfumes, books

Meal Prep / Recipes

PAGE 40/44



Angela Moscarelli
CPA, CA, RHN

Practice: Guided Wellness guidedwellness.ca

Focus: Helping busy professionals optimise their health

Fan of: Gardening, fitness, and nature

Tip: A healthy lifestyle is about balance!

On my shelf: Spirulina, lemons, fermented coconut milk

THE SWAP–YOGURT PARFAIT PAGE 50



MARIA D'ALESSANDRO
RHN

Practice: Miala | www.miala.ca
Focus: Women's health, menstrual cycle, and endometriosis
Fan of: Walking my dog Apollo & reformer Pilates
Tip: Everything in moderation!
On my shelf: Magnesium, L-Glutamine

THE FAMILY TABLE PAGE 52



DR. SARAH WHITE
ND

Practice: Replete Wellness (virtual) repletewellness.com
Focus: Fertility, anti-aging, and skin health
Fan of: Raising chickens and gardening
Tip: Morning healthy fats and protein!
On my shelf: Liposomal glutathione, curcumin

ALL ABOUT CINNAMON PAGE 58



QUINN CARLAN
CNP

Practice: Quinn Carlan Wellness
Focus: Gut health, hormone health, mental health
Fan of: Food, movement, and the great outdoors
Tip: Nutrition–Keep it simple!
On my shelf: Functional mushrooms, warming spices, so many teas

"THE GROUNDWORK FOR ALL HAPPINESS IS HEALTH."

– *Leigh Hunt*



Elevate

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CELEBRATE CANADA DAY

With Crafting & Family Activities

Dr. Nicole Daniels, ND

Gelpi / Depositphotos.com

One of my favourite jobs when I was younger was being a face painter for our town's Canada Day festival. It was so enjoyable drawing maple leaves on people's faces (and of course, the odd random request, like a beaver playing hockey). But the best part was asking kids what they loved about Canada and hearing all the joyful answers, then seeing their faces beam with pride, adorned with the Canadian colours of red and white.

In addition to attending your local Canada Day celebration, there are many things you can do at home to celebrate. Below are some kid-friendly crafts, activities, and traditions that bring the spirit of the day to life while encouraging creativity and connection with Canadian pride.

Canada Day Crafting

Nothing says Canada Day like vibrant reds, sparkling whites, and the iconic maple leaf. Crafting as a family is a perfect way to ease into the celebrations, especially for younger kids who love hands-on play. A simple craft you can try with kids is leaf stamping on paper. Collect different sizes of maple leaves and use them as stamps: Paint one side of the leaf with red paint, then press the painted side onto paper to create a colour collage.

Looking for another way to ignite your child's inner artist? Grab some sidewalk chalk and head to the driveway or sidewalk for a burst of patriotic creativity. Kids can trace maple leaves using stencils or real leaves from the yard, then fill them in with red chalk. Older children may enjoy drawing full Canadian landscapes (mountains, loons, canoes, etc.), turning the pavement into a temporary celebration mural. This simple activity also attracts neighbourhood smiles and spreads the festive spirit.

Canadian colours and themes can be incorporated into any craft! Bring out the beads and let kids craft wearable works of art. Red and white beads, tiny maple leaf charms, or letter beads spelling "CANADA" make for a great hands-on activity. Threading beads is also great for improving fine motor skills and pattern development. Or set up a mini art station with red and white paint, construction paper, pom-poms, glitter, and stickers. Younger children can finger-paint flags or make simple collages, while older kids might experiment with mixed-media pieces or try painting famous Canadian landmarks.

The Great Canadian Scavenger Hunt

What better way to keep kids active and outdoors than with a themed scavenger hunt? Turn your backyard, neighbourhood, or local park into a playful challenge that invites curiosity about the world around them. Create a list of "Canadian things" for your children to find, such as:

» Something red
» A maple leaf
» A triangle shape (like the peaks of the Rockies)
» Something soft like a beaver tail (the animal, not the treat!)
» A picture of a moose
» Something that reminds you of winter
» A coin with the Bluenose or a loon
» A local wildflower

Kids can collect items in a bag, take photos of objects they can't carry, or draw quick sketches of what they find. For older kids, convert the list into riddles for a more difficult and engaging hunt. Make the grand end of the scavenger hunt as an outdoor celebration or a backyard barbecue. Play Canadian music in the background and let the kids share their favourite discoveries from the hunt. It's a beautiful way to blend exploration with family bonding.

Celebrate Canadian Culture

Beyond the crafts and games, Canada Day is also a moment to appreciate the culture, foods, and experiences that make our country unique.

Set up a cozy reading corner indoors or outdoors with blankets and pillows, visit your local library or bookstore, and enjoy stories written by Canadian and Indigenous authors. Whether you're flipping through picture books, poetry, or kid-friendly tales about Canadian animals or traditions, reading together sparks meaningful conversations about identity, place, and history.

Canadian Charcuterie

Indulge in the quintessential flavours of Canadian food! A kid-friendly charcuterie board is a delicious way to showcase Canadian flavours. Include local cheeses, smoked salmon, fresh berries, Saskatoon jam, maple-glazed nuts, mini butter tarts, bannock bites, or vegetables shaped with small maple-leaf cookie cutters. Let kids help assemble the board—this encourages them to try new foods and learn where local ingredients come from.

Capture It in a Time Capsule

End the day by creating a Canada Day time capsule that the family will open next year. Invite each family member to contribute something meaningful:

» A drawing of their favourite part of the day
» A small craft they made
» A letter about what they're grateful for
» A list of favourite Canadian places
» A folded mini flag
» A photo taken during the celebrations

Store everything in a decorated box or sealed container, label it "Open July 1, 2027," and tuck it somewhere safe. When the next Canada Day rolls around, opening the time capsule becomes a touching tradition that celebrates growth, change, and togetherness.

Canada Day is more than just a holiday. It's a reminder to pause and give gratitude for the beauty of this country, its people, and its traditions. It's a time to honour where we live, reflect on what makes this country special, and remind ourselves why we are blessed to call this place home. Through crafts, outdoor adventures, shared stories, and simple traditions, we plant memories that will last long beyond the celebration of the day. Thank you, Canada!

CELEBRATE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY

We can't celebrate Canada Day without acknowledging Canada's Indigenous population. On June 21, you can honour the Indigenous Peoples of Canada by attending your local Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations. The day celebrates the culture, language, and traditions of the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities of Canada. It's a great opportunity to open your children up to the country's rich culture of Indigenous artwork, music, and books, while educating them on its complex history.

Get started with these books:

Canada: We Are the Story
by Richard Wagamese (ages 3–7)

Chi miigwech, big thank you
by astra martà (ages 3–5)

National Indigenous Peoples Day
by Jem Maracle (ages 4–8)



A Holistic Approach to Childhood Depression

Natural Remedies to Support Your Child's Mental Health

Dr. Daniella Perri, ND & CCCE

Richard Stachmann / Unsplash+

Mental health conditions in children, such as depression and anxiety, are often misdiagnosed as temper tantrums and poor behaviour. As a naturopathic doctor who has seen many families with children who are dealing with mental health concerns, one thing is certain: there are options for treatment. I often get asked if natural remedies can be used in tandem with pharmaceutical medications, and the answer is yes. You just need a practitioner to give you the information and guidance to fully support the child in mind. This article is a way to introduce some of the many options that are available to parents who want to start with a natural approach and use gentle yet effective ways to support their child's mental well-being.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF CHILDHOOD DEPRESSION

From a naturopathic perspective, we view children as being vibrant and full of *qi*, the energetic life force. A child is more than just a collection of symptoms; they're a being that encompasses an interconnected ecosystem. When that ecosystem's balance is tipped, we start to see the individual physical symptoms. This is important to know as it will help us to identify a specific treatment approach and tailor remedies that will be most beneficial. So, what are the symptoms of depression in a child? It may be easier to understand the symptoms from this perspective: Childhood depression is less of a "brain only" condition and more of an integrated experience involving the gut, the immune system, and the child's internal and external environments.

Unlike adults, where we may see low mood and continuous bouts of crying, children tend to display more erratic behaviour:

- **Irritability:** You won't find a child crying every day; rather, you will see them acting out, not listening, and having multiple temper tantrums in an attempt to cry out for help.
- **Somatic complaints:** These are physical pains that the child may constantly complain about, such as stomachaches that happen every morning right before they have to go to school.
- **Lack of joy:** This is common to many people suffering from depression. It is the loss of joy in things, such as toys or activities, that used to make the child happy.
- **Sleep disruption:** Most children don't get the recommended amount of sleep, so it's no surprise that this symptom goes unnoticed, much less associated with a mood disorder.

It is important to note that just because your child has one or more of these symptoms, like temper tantrums, for example, it does not mean they're depressed. These symptoms are assessed in conjunction with other causative factors that may contribute to depression.

One study concluded that children who experienced depressive symptoms during childhood and adolescence were more likely to suffer from mental health concerns in young adulthood.[1] That means intervening sooner—and with the right approach—can help children have more stable mental health outcomes later on in life.

A NATUROPATHIC APPROACH TO YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH

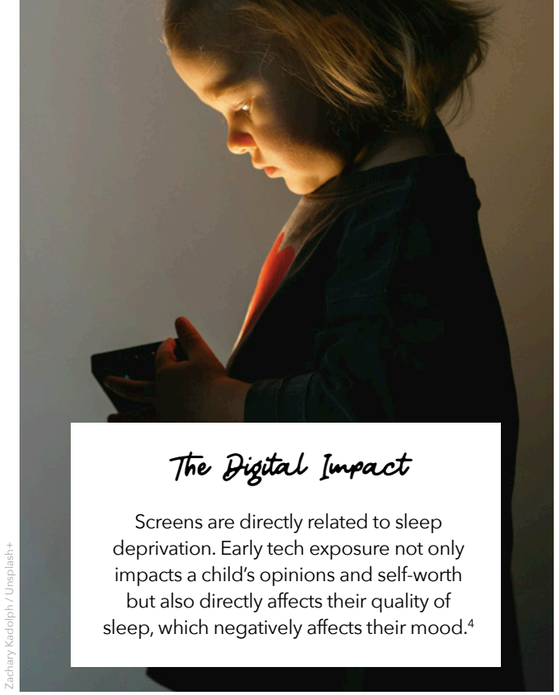
Before we discuss the details, it's important to know how we approach treating a child with depression. As mentioned earlier, a child is an ecosystem with moving parts that are all connected. This means depression can affect not only the nervous system but also many other systems, including the immune and gastrointestinal systems. We don't just want to add a remedy as a Band-Aid, we want to treat the root cause as well.

The Gut-Brain Axis

A child's internal terrain, or environment, gives us clues as to what remedies would be most beneficial. The gut has an immense impact on mental health as it is also a source of serotonin and GABA production. When gut permeability and dysbiosis (imbalanced gut bacteria) are present, they create an imbalance in these neurotransmitters, leading to depressive symptoms.[2]

Nutrient Deficiencies

Nutritional deficiencies have a negative impact on brain development and nervous system function. As a result, this increases the risk for depressive symptoms.[3] Deficiencies in protein, B vitamins, vitamin D, magnesium, zinc, selenium, iron, calcium, and omega-3 fatty acids have been associated with a diagnosis of depression. Since a child's internal environment matters to the overall well-being of their mental health, knowing that nutrition can help stabilize mood is reassuring for naturopaths and parents!



Zachary Kadolph / Unsplash+

The Digital Impact

Screens are directly related to sleep deprivation. Early tech exposure not only impacts a child's opinions and self-worth but also directly affects their quality of sleep, which negatively affects their mood.[4]



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Connection to Nature

A child's access to green space is positively correlated to their mood. Exposure to green space early in life was associated with fewer internalizing symptoms, such as depression.[5] Children are innately connected to nature, so removing or limiting that from them can offset their internal balance and cause added stress.[6] Stress management is an integral part of treating childhood depression. This means we need to get to the bottom of that stress. This could be a traumatic event, poor family dynamics, or issues at school (e.g., bullying).

Now that we know some approaches to take when creating treatment plans, let's talk about what those treatments are.



Yunus Tuğ / Unsplash+

NATUROPATHIC REMEDIES FOR CHILDHOOD DEPRESSION

Taking into consideration the aforementioned approaches, the following list of remedies and supplements may be prescribed to your child by your naturopathic doctor. I tend to be more conservative when prescribing supplements, but two to three remedies is quite common.

Common supplements used for treating children with depression:

» **Omega-3 fatty acids**[7] are food for the brain and sourced from fish, but vegan options are available

» **Probiotics**[8] and glutamine repair the gut and fortify good gut bacteria

» **Multivitamins** help replenish nutrient deficiencies

» **Magnesium** helps calm the mind and body, which reduces stress

» **Lemon balm and chamomile** are relaxing botanicals, usually given as teas, to help reduce stress and support a healthy gut

The dosages and frequency of intake of these nutrients depend on the child's age and weight, as well as the discretion of the naturopathic doctor. Also, the order in which these supplements are introduced to the child will depend on the severity of symptoms and what is most concerning for the parents.

Other non-supplement treatment strategies can include the following:

» **Exposure to nature.** No matter the weather, get your child outside. Connecting with nature will help balance their internal environment.

» **Psychotherapist sessions.** Practitioners with added pediatric experience may be beneficial in providing tools to help manage stress and depressive symptoms at home and at school.

It's not easy to understand what a child is feeling. A child's communication is sometimes not as clear as with adults. This can make a diagnosis of depression a little more tricky. While there are common symptoms, such as sadness and erratic behaviour, that help to make a diagnosis, other subtle cues like disrupted sleep and constant stomach pain can turn on the lightbulb in our heads. We often try to find physical reasons for children's physical complaints, but sometimes, we need to investigate the quality of their mental health. Knowing that children (and all humans) are complex beings with interconnected systems, approaching their care with a broader lens helps us to fine-tune their naturopathic treatment. Understanding that depression affects not only the brain but also the immune and gastrointestinal systems allows us to treat the root cause. Every child who experiences depression presents their symptoms in unique ways, so their treatment plan should reflect that to provide them with the most beneficial naturopathic care.

For references visit *ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM26*

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Ask a Herbalist

Bees, Burnout & the Art of Letting Go

Vervain

Mary Charteris, BScN, RN, RH

Photo: Awaken Herb Farm

Meet vervain, herbal ally to the "wired and tired" of the world. Bringing relief for type-A personalities, the busy bees, high achievers, and caregivers who just won't sit down and relax—but in a totally helpful kind of way! Vervain is a premier nervine, meaning it's serious non-sedating support for the frayed edges of an overworked mind and a tense body. According to community herbalist 7Song, vervain can be well suited for people who strive for greatness, have a deep sense of justice, have difficulty sleeping, and are at risk of periods of burnout.[1,2]

Defined by its distinctive bitter taste and its versatility, not only does vervain shine as a relaxant, but it's also an excellent herb for digestive ailments, female hormonal health, and generalized nervous tension.[3,4] It acts as a conduit between the nervous system and muscles of the head, neck, jaw, and shoulders, where chronic tension can turn up as headaches, jaw pain, or stiffness.[2] Sometimes referred to as "simpler's joy" amongst traditional herbalists, this is a nod to its herbal utility towards bringing joyful ease to a very broad range of tense symptom patterns.[5]

While holding an important place in the modern herbalist's cabinet, vervain was revered in ancient Egypt and Greece as a sacred plant. The Romans referred to vervain as *herba sacra* or "holy plant" and used sprigs of the plant to cleanse temple altars. It was featured as a symbol of peace amongst the druids and offered in their ceremonies. Vervain was written about in the Middle Ages by Saint Hildegard von Bingen, master herbalist, Benedictine nun, and polymath who described its use in cases of throat inflammation, issues of teeth and gums, liver conditions, and a topical compress for skin ulcers.[6] North American Indigenous Peoples traditionally prepared vervain leaves, seeds, and roots to ease symptoms of cold and fever.[7]

An incredibly dynamic herb, I reach for vervain most for its uniquely soothing effect on nervous tension. Its strongly bitter taste makes it great at stimulating healthy gastric secretions, but a less popular choice in a tea. It features strongly as part of a tincture formula for chronic headaches, shoulder and neck tension, painful periods, or sluggish bowels that can accompany travel, hectic schedules, overwork, worry, or big life transitions. Combining vervain with herbs such as passionflower, shatavari, and chamomile makes an excellent tonic for patterns of overthinking with emotional irritability. Vervain brings a sense of ease and awareness to the present moment, which helps support those recovering from patterns of addiction. I like to formulate vervain with another favourite herb, motherwort, for clients experiencing menstrual irregularity, hormonal irritability, or painful cramping. I've grown vervain in my garden

Herbal Profile

Vervain *(Verbena officinalis)*

Common names: Blue vervain, simpler's joy, holy herb, herb of grace, wild hyssop, pigeon grass

Family: *Verbenaceae*

Parts used: Flowering tops

Taste: Bitter, acrid

Active constituents: Iridoids, polyphenols and flavonoids, essential oils (citral), mucilage[3]

Herbal actions: Nervine tonic, sedative, antispasmodic, diaphoretic, hypotensive, emmenagogue, hepatic[3]

Energetics: Cooling, drying, relaxing

Affinities: Nervous system, musculoskeletal, female reproductive

Tissue states: Constriction, atrophy[4]

PREPARATIONS & APPLICATIONS

Dosage: 2–4 g daily

Tincture: 2.5–5 ml three times daily (1:5 in 40%)

Infusion: Pour 1 cup of low-boiled water over 1–3 teaspoons of dried herb, steep the infusion covered for 10–15 minutes. Drink up to three times per day.

Safety considerations/contraindications: Has not been tested for safe use in pregnancy or breastfeeding

for the last few years, and I note how bumblebees flock to the plant and appear to languish in their work amongst the flowers.

Vervain's relaxant qualities offer nurturing effects on the digestive and female reproductive systems, as well as the musculoskeletal system. In a world that can feel increasingly fast-paced, vervain offers restorative effects for an overwhelmed mind and body.

PLANT DESCRIPTION

A gangly perennial plant, vervain has several main medicinal varieties: blue vervain, or *Verbena hastata*, and hoary vervain, or *Verbena stricta*. Both species can be used interchangeably in herbal practice and are found from coast to coast as native species in cooler climates across North America. *Verbena officinalis* species grows in Europe and has a rich history of use there.[2] White vervain, or *Verbena urticifolia*, is found in many gardens; however, it's not commonly used in herbal therapeutics. Vervains are hardy wildflowers found in cooler, damp areas near meadows, marshes, and sometimes roadways. The plant's stiff, square-shaped stems can grow anywhere from six inches up to five feet in height. From early summer until autumn, these are topped with narrow candelabras of five-petalled star-shaped flowers beloved by pollinators. Vervain's flowers are most commonly a light purple in colour but can also be found in pink or white varieties. Leaves are arranged in opposite pairs, have a lanced or toothed appearance, and are typically rough to the touch.[11]

CHARACTER

English botanist and herbalist Nicholas Culpeper linked vervain to the influence of the planet Venus, due in part to its relaxant effects that can result in softening of the mind and body.[2,12] Medical astrology views Venus as the governing planet of the hormonal system, the female reproductive organs, and circulation.[2]

PROPERTIES & INDICATIONS

Nervous System & Mental Health

Vervain is considered a nervine sedative, which highlights its ability to aid and restore nervous system balance. It can bring a unique sense of calm and clarity to our minds, without creating drowsiness. Modern research is exploring how plant compounds called *iridoids* in vervain interact with the brain's GABA (gamma-aminobutyric acid) network.[8] The GABA network is a branch of the nervous system responsible for helping the brain to relax and regulate during states of overstimulation.[8,9]

Indications
» Tension headaches
» Stiffness at the nape of the neck or in the shoulders
» Excessive mental activity
» Nervous spasms or tremors[10]

Digestive Health

Strongly bitter components make vervain a digestive tonic. ***Warning:*** It can bring on nausea and vomiting if not dosed properly! Best taken in small drop-doses. This can stimulate digestive secretions and increase bile secretion.

Indications
» Sluggish or weak digestion
» Constipation
» Bloating
» Upper GI reflux[4]

Female Reproductive Health

A traditional remedy for irregular or painful menstruation and later hormonal shifts occurring in menopause.[2,4] Vervain is a herb that acts as a bridge for the nervous and reproductive systems. Its gentle relaxant properties work to free up physical and mental tension, which can in turn nurture more balance and regularity for our hormones and our reproductive cycles.

Indications
» Cramping pain and tension before or during menstruation
» Irregular periods
» Pronounced anxiety, anger, or cravings associated with menstruation
» Hot flashes combined with irritability associated with menopause[4]
» Stubborn fever with tension and inability to produce sweat[2,4]
» Throat or gum irritation (as a gargle)[3]

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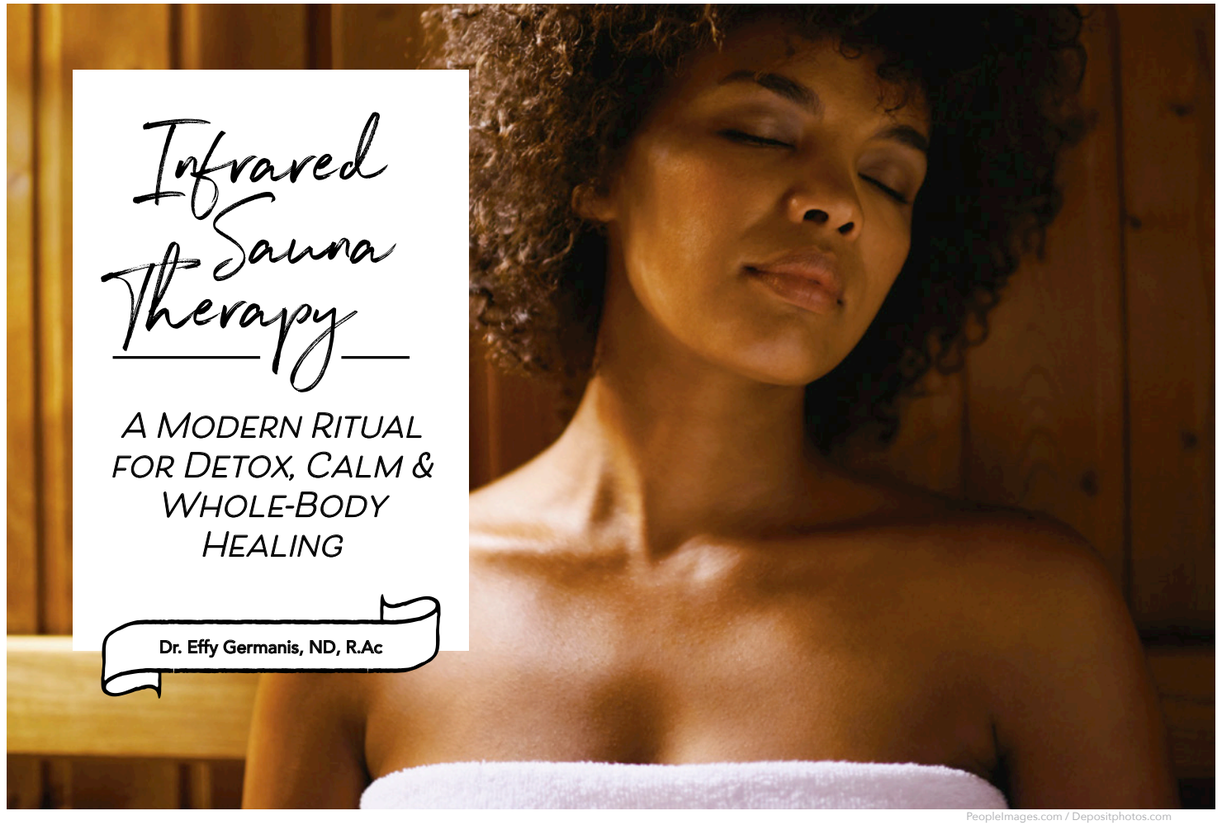
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Infrared sauna therapy has been one of my favourite wellness tools for years, not just professionally but also personally.

As a naturopathic doctor and acupuncturist, I have spent over a decade helping people work through stubborn health concerns like digestive dysfunction, chronic inflammation, hormonal imbalance, fatigue, stress overload, and metabolic challenges. And something I've learned again and again is that healing doesn't come from quick fixes. It comes from creating consistent, supportive rituals that help the body do what it was designed to do.

For me, infrared sauna became one of those rituals.

I first fell in love with it during a period of intense work and emotional burnout. I was seeing patients all day, teaching, running a clinic, and like many people, I was carrying stress in ways I didn't fully recognize. The sauna became a place where my nervous system could soften, my muscles could release, and my mind could finally slow down.

Over time, I began to see how powerful infrared sauna therapy could be for more than just relaxation. It can also help with detoxification, inflammation support, metabolic health, and overall resilience. Infrared sauna isn't just a trend. It's a deeply therapeutic practice that supports multiple systems of the body at once. Let's explore some of its benefits.

DETOXIFYING THE BODY

One of the most talked-about benefits of infrared sauna therapy is detoxification.[1] To understand this, it helps to know how infrared saunas differ from traditional saunas. Traditional saunas heat the air around you, often reaching very high temperatures. Infrared saunas use infrared light to gently warm the body directly, allowing you to sweat deeply at a lower and more tolerable temperature.

Sweating is one of the body's natural detox pathways. We often think of detox as something extreme, but true detoxification is simply the body doing what it does every day through the liver, kidneys, lymphatic system, skin, and digestive tract. Infrared sauna may support detoxification in several ways:

» **Encouraging deep sweating**, which helps eliminate certain environmental compounds

» **Supporting circulation**, which improves the delivery of oxygen and nutrients

» **Stimulating lymphatic flow**, which helps the body clear waste

» **Promoting relaxation**, which indirectly supports detox pathways

Many people report feeling lighter, clearer, and more energized after consistent sauna use. Some notice improved skin tone, reduced puffiness, and better digestion. It's important to remember that detox is not about forcing the body to cleanse aggressively; it's about supporting the organs of elimination gently and consistently. Infrared sauna can be one of the most soothing ways to do that.[1]

RELIEVING STRESS

In my clinical practice, stress is one of the most common root contributors I see behind chronic symptoms. Stress affects everything: digestion, sleep, immune function, hormones, blood sugar regulation, mood, inflammation, and even weight. When the nervous system is stuck in a constant state of fight or flight, the body can't prioritize healing.

Infrared sauna therapy is one of the most effective tools I've found for shifting the body into a parasympathetic state, also known as rest and digest. When you sit in an infrared sauna, several calming physiological changes occur:

» Heart rate gently increases, similar to light exercise
» Muscles relax as heat penetrates tissues
» Endorphins are released, improving mood
» Cortisol levels may begin to normalize over time[2]
» The nervous system receives a signal of safety and stillness

Many people describe infrared sauna as meditation without pressure. You do not have to do anything. You simply sit, breathe, and allow your body to unwind. This can be especially powerful for those who feel mentally overloaded, emotionally tense, or chronically fatigued. In a world that constantly demands more, the sauna becomes a rare invitation to slow down.

REDUCING INFLAMMATION

Chronic inflammation is at the root of many modern health concerns. Inflammation is not always harmful. In fact, it's part of the body's natural immune response. But when inflammation becomes long-term, it can contribute to issues such as:

» Joint pain and stiffness
» Autoimmune flares
» Digestive disorders
» Brain fog
» Cardiovascular stress
» Hormonal imbalance
» Accelerated aging

Infrared sauna therapy has been studied for its potential anti-inflammatory effects through several mechanisms. Heat exposure can help improve circulation, bringing more oxygenated blood to tissues while supporting recovery and repair. It may also reduce oxidative stress, which plays a role in inflammatory pathways.

Some research suggests infrared therapy may support reductions in markers like C-reactive protein, a common inflammatory indicator.[3]

Clinically, many individuals find infrared sauna helpful for:

» Muscle soreness after exercise
» Chronic pain conditions
» Arthritis and stiffness
» Post-illness recovery
» General inflammatory load

Infrared sauna is not a replacement for addressing root causes like nutrition, gut health, sleep, or stress, but it can be an incredibly supportive addition to a comprehensive healing plan. I often describe it as a gentle therapy that helps the body soften out of survival mode and into repair mode.

THE SAUNA & FATTY LIVER

One of the most fascinating emerging areas of infrared sauna research is its connection to metabolic health, including fatty liver support.

Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (now called metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease [MASLD]) is becoming increasingly common, often linked with insulin resistance, blood sugar dysregulation, weight gain, inflammation, and sedentary lifestyles.

The liver is central to detoxification, hormone metabolism, and fat processing. When excess fat accumulates in liver tissue, it can impair these functions and increase systemic inflammation.[4] Infrared sauna may offer supportive benefits for fatty liver through:

» Improving insulin sensitivity
» Supporting circulation and metabolic function
» Mimicking some effects of cardiovascular exercise
» Reducing inflammation and oxidative stress
» Encouraging gentle detoxification pathways[1]

While sauna use alone is not a cure, it may be a valuable complementary tool alongside foundational lifestyle strategies such as:

» Balanced nutrition with whole foods
» Reduced refined sugar and processed carbohydrates
» Movement and strength training
» Stress reduction
» Targeted supplementation when appropriate
» Supporting gut and hormone health

For individuals who struggle with exercise due to fatigue, chronic pain, or mobility limitations, infrared sauna can provide a supportive metabolic boost while they work toward deeper healing.[3] It's one more way to remind the body how to circulate, release, and restore.

A GENTLE REMINDER: SAUNA AS A WELLNESS PRACTICE

Infrared sauna therapy is not about pushing the body harder. It's about supporting the body smarter. Like acupuncture, herbal medicine, and mindful movement, sauna works best when it becomes part of a consistent rhythm rather than an occasional extreme intervention.

If you're new to infrared sauna, start slowly:

» Begin with 10–15 minutes
» Hydrate well before and after
» Replace minerals with electrolytes if sweating heavily
» Listen to your body



dlpn / Depositphotos.com

» Avoid sauna use during illness, pregnancy, and certain cardiovascular conditions unless cleared by your provider

When used appropriately, infrared sauna can be a deeply nourishing practice that supports detoxification, stress relief, inflammation reduction, and metabolic resilience.

For me, it remains one of the most powerful modern rituals for returning to balance, because true health isn't built in one moment. It's built through the small practices, or daily rituals (like the Hygeia rituals I've created), that remind the body it is safe, supported, and capable of healing.

For references visit *ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM26*

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Ask a Naturopath

FATTY LIVER & YOUR FAMILY

Why Is It on the Rise?

Dr. Danielle Essel, ND

Ryan Collins / Unsplash+

It's fascinating to think back on the human diet today versus hundreds or even thousands of years ago. Or how much we move and work with our bodies now versus how we did then. And yet, our biology is pretty much the same. The body works with a clear energy system: energy goes in, energy goes out. But what happens when the energy in is so much higher than the energy out? This imbalance describes the reason metabolic diseases, including type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, dyslipidemia, and fatty liver disease, are on the rise. Twenty years ago, fatty liver disease was a rare occurrence in children, and yet, recent estimates have found that 8 to 10 percent of children of average weight and up to 25 to 40 percent of children with obesity are likely to be diagnosed with fatty liver disease.[1] This increase is alarming, and while there are no current pharmaceutical solutions for fatty liver disease, especially in children, naturopathic medicine approaches can significantly reduce, if not completely resolve, fatty liver disease in children and adults.

WHAT CAUSES FATTY LIVER IN CHILDREN?

Have you ever gone to a restaurant with a children's menu? In Canada, especially, foods that are deemed "child friendly" are usually fried, processed, and high in sodium, sugar, and fat.[2] Ready-made snacks and school lunches have the same dietary issue, and children quickly become accustomed, if not addicted, to these foods. Sugar, salt, and fat are able to light up our brains like nothing else, a survival mechanism remnant of times when famine was a part of everyday life. Not only are these foods low in nutrients and high in calories, but they've also been linked to many childhood diseases, especially fatty liver disease.

While diet is the biggest contributor to fatty liver disease in children, lack of movement is another contributing factor. When food is high in fats and sugars and muscles are not properly or frequently used, the liver will store sugar as fat right on itself. Fat on the liver creates many dysfunctions, one of which is insulin resistance. This creates a vicious cycle, where insulin resistance further increases liver fat production and storage, creating even more insulin resistance. Needless to say, fatty liver disease isn't something to ignore or hope that it will resolve on its own.

Here are some common foods and drinks that have been shown to increase the risk of fatty liver disease in children, as well as healthier alternatives to consider:

	Foods to Avoid	Healthier Alternatives
Sugary drinks	» soda » sweetened juice » sports drinks	» water with fruit slices » milk/milk alternatives
Sweets & desserts	» candy » cookies » donuts » cake	» fresh fruit » yogurt with berries » homemade oat muffins
Fast food & fried foods	» fries » fried chicken » burgers » nuggets	» grilled chicken » baked potatoes/ wedges » homemade burgers
Packaged "kid snacks"	» chips » snack cakes » sugary granola bars	» popcorn (air-popped) » trail mix » cheese & whole-grain crackers
Refined carb-heavy meals	» white bread » pizza » white pasta » sugary cereal	» whole-grain bread » whole-wheat pasta » oats » brown rice

SYMPTOMS OF FATTY LIVER IN CHILDREN

The main reason that fatty liver disease can go unnoticed or diagnosed with great difficulty is because oftentimes, children don't have any symptoms, and lab results can come back normal. Even with significant liver fat accumulation, a child may appear otherwise healthy. Some common symptoms include:

» general fatigue
» poor stamina
» bloating

Unfortunately, these symptoms are frustratingly vague and unhelpful in giving us a clear diagnosis. I once had an eight-year-old child come to my clinic with an upset stomach—a common thing to see with school-aged children. The stomach upset didn't happen every day and was mild to moderate at best. This child was not overweight and was otherwise very healthy. The strongest indicators that this child might have fatty liver disease were a family history from both parents and a diet high in processed foods and low in fruits and veggies. Fatty liver disease is highly genetic and incredibly influenced by foods, which is why treating and even preventing fatty liver disease means eating well and moving the body to use up that energy properly.

TREATING FATTY LIVER DISEASE IN CHILDREN

A High-Fibre Diet

The liver is an organ of sugar metabolism and fat storage, which means that the lens with which we treat it needs to be metabolic in nature. "Energy," also known as calories, is stored in food, and while we tend to assign calories a numerical value, not all calories are created equal. That is, you can eat 100 calories of different foods, but the effect they have on the body will be very different depending on the type of food: 100 calories can either be 10 fries or three whole cups of broccoli.

The biggest difference here, and the one most relevant to fatty liver disease, is that processed and fried foods have very accessible sugars and fats with barely any fibre. Fibre works kind of like a net in the gut, trapping fats and modulating insulin responses to sugar, and this makes a huge difference to the liver in terms of the amount it has to process and store. A diet high in fibre can allow the liver to heal itself.

High-fibre foods include:

» **legumes**, such as beans and lentils
» **seeds**, such as flax, hemp, chia, and pumpkin
» **whole grains**, such as oats, quinoa, buckwheat, and barley
» **fruits**, such as raspberries, blackberries, pears, and avocado
» **vegetables**, such as broccoli, green peas, artichokes, and Brussels sprouts

If you're reading this list and thinking, "My kid would never eat most of these!" I hear you. It's important to recognize that children can become quite attached to foods that have accessible fats and sugars, such as fried or processed foods. Changing a diet doesn't have to happen overnight. Creating a schedule with gradual changes can create a less stressful and more sustainable environment for all involved.

Daily Movement

Children with or at risk of fatty liver disease need to engage in at least 60 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous activity. This doesn't necessarily mean competitive sports, though it could, but can even mean cycling, playing at the playground (climbing, swinging), or walking briskly. Incorporating movement in a child's day shouldn't feel like a chore, since we aim to integrate it into their daily life, long term. Thinking about what could be sustainable in terms of food and movement for your family is key, as fatty liver disease requires these changes for the rest of your kiddo's life. Worry not—eventually, every change becomes the new normal!

FATTY LIVER IN ADULTS

As adults, we have a clear disadvantage over children, metabolically speaking, since we're no longer growing at exponential rates—our metabolism and the liver's ability to process sugar slows down considerably every decade.[3] Another interesting fact is that dopamine signalling can decline by about 5 to 10 percent per decade after early adulthood, which means that our reward centers can crave more sugar in our food to make up for the decline.[4] However, the advantage we have as adults is that we're more resourceful when it comes to creating change and taking care of ourselves. Adults with high-risk or current fatty liver disease should do the following:

» **Get relevant testing done** to both track improvement and rule out other metabolic diseases or conditions that can be present.

» **Avoid alcoholic beverages**

» **Focus on a daily intake of vegetables**, legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds, olive oil, fish, lean meat, and low-glycemic fruits.

» **Limit sugars and fructose**, and avoid refined carbohydrates (e.g., white bread and pastries), sugar-sweetened beverages, candies, and high-fructose processed foods.

» **Aim for five hours of moderate exercise per week**, such as brisk walking, cycling, swimming, and strength training

SUPPLEMENTS FOR FATTY LIVER

Even as a naturopathic doctor, the supplement section at a health food store is outright overwhelming. It can be difficult to navigate which supplement is best, at what dose, at what frequency, and whether it's safe for you specifically to take. That's why I highly recommend first speaking with a naturopathic doctor before buying supplements, especially for patients with fatty liver disease who have an already weakened liver. We wouldn't want to overwhelm the liver with supplements in our attempt to heal it! However, the following supplements have been shown to help with fatty liver disease and might be worth discussing with your naturopath:

1. **Vitamin E** is a powerful antioxidant. Some clinical trials have shown that vitamin E supplementation improved liver function tests and reduced inflammation in adults with fatty liver disease. Please note that it is not recommended to take vitamin E without medical supervision.[5]

2. **Milk thistle** contains an antioxidant called silymarin, which has been shown to specifically support liver inflammation and oxidative stress.[6]

3. **Choline** is an essential nutrient used in liver fat export. Studies show that choline deficiency can worsen liver fat, and high choline intake is associated with a lower risk of fatty liver disease.[7]

We have to remember that the liver is a super organ. It does so much for us when it comes to processing energy and ridding us of toxins. It's the only organ that has the ability to regenerate after injury, which includes fatty liver disease. With the right lifestyle changes, a liver can heal and regenerate to its formative health, giving you a considerably better quality of life.

For references visit *ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM26*

The Goods

Preventing Fatty Liver Disease

Metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD) is on the rise in both kids and adults and can lead to health problems like insulin resistance, cirrhosis, and even liver cancer.[1] Eating lots of high-fibre foods, getting daily exercise or movement, and taking the right supplements can decrease your risk—or even reverse the effects—of MASLD and increase your quality of life.

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Pregnancy and postpartum are such powerful and transformative experiences for soon-to-be and new moms. But despite being a beautiful time of bonding for you and your child, there are a lot of physical and emotional challenges that come up in the perinatal period. One of the most common ailments I see amongst the perinatal population in my private practice is constipation. While it is a normal concern during pregnancy and postpartum—and isn't usually a cause for concern—it can be frustrating and uncomfortable. Feeling backed up consistently can impact quality of life and make the aches and pains of pregnancy and postpartum recovery a little trickier. This article will define what constipation really is by breaking down the signs and symptoms, explain the common culprits that lead to this presentation, and most importantly, give you evidence-backed ways to get things moving again.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF CONSTIPATION

Every patient and physician defines constipation differently. Its classic definition has universally been infrequent bowel movements; however, other aspects of bowel movements may constitute constipation, such as incomplete evacuation, straining, and small or hard stools. It's critical to always consult a healthcare provider if you are experiencing constipation and if you notice a change in your bowel movements, especially if you have significant abdominal pain, blood or mucus in the stool, unexplained weight loss, persistent vomiting, or no bowel movement for over four days.[1] Common symptoms of constipation include having less than three bowel movements a week, experiencing pain or straining when having a bowel movement, having hard, dry, and lumpy stools, feeling like your bowel movements are incomplete, and/or feeling like your rectum is full or blocked.[2] It's important to note that constipation is a symptom, not a disease. There is most often an underlying reason why the constipation is occurring, and it is important to find the root cause to improve your experience.

COMMON CULPRITS CAUSING BACK-UP

Pregnancy

Many changes occur to the body's anatomy and biology during pregnancy that can cause constipation. For this reason, the development of constipation in pregnancy is often multifactorial, with main common causes being anatomic, medication-related, dietary, or physiological. In the first trimester, the female



ermovik / Depositphotos.com

hormone progesterone dominates and one of its effects as a hormone is to relax smooth muscle, which in turn relaxes the bowels and reduces gut motility, making it a common culprit for slow-transit constipation. As a pregnancy progresses into the third trimester, anatomical implications become more apparent. A gravid uterus—the uterus of a pregnant woman—often exerts pressure on the rectosigmoid colon (the region that connects the colon to the rectum), which can obstruct the transit of stool.[3] Lastly, an important hormone called relaxin, which peaks in the first and third trimesters, is released by the corpus luteum (a hormone-secreting structure that is formed from a ruptured follicle in the ovary during ovulation) and the placenta. This hormone is released to prepare the body for overall pregnancy and labour as it loosens ligaments and relaxes the cervix and uterine muscles. While relaxin is completing a critical job, it also reduces contractions of the smooth muscle of the colon (more particularly the ileum, which is the third part of the small intestine), resulting in slower transit and, in turn, constipation.[3]

Postpartum

Postpartum constipation is also multifactorial. One of the proposed causes is an interruption in dietary intake while in labour as well as dehydration, which is common when there

> FOR PREGNANCY, FIRST-LINE THERAPIES FOR CONSTIPATION INCLUDE INCREASING FIBRE CONTENT (WHICH COMES FROM FRUITS, VEGETABLES, LEGUMES, WHOLE GRAINS, AND NUTS AND SEEDS) AND INCREASING HYDRATION.

has not been sufficient fluid intake during prolonged hours of labour. Maternal diet during the postpartum period often differs from previous nutrition with reduced fibre consumption in most cases, resulting in backed-up stools.[4] From a hormonal perspective, as mentioned previously, progesterone can exert effects on the smooth muscle of the bowels allowing them to relax, which slows motility.[3] Since progesterone is still in circulation a few weeks after labour, it can impact gut motility and cause constipation in the first part of the postpartum period. Side effects of medications used during labour and delivery, such as opiates and analgesics, can also cause constipation, as can structural changes like a repaired episiotomy, raw perineum, anal sphincter damage, perineal tears, or Cesarean section, all of which can lead to hesitation, pain, and discomfort surrounding defecation. The fear of having a bowel movement results in stool staying in the lumen of the intestine longer, which results in water being re-absorbed, making stools drier and even harder to pass. Other risk factors include hemorrhoids and pelvic floor damage or dysfunction.[4]



szefei / Depositphotos.com

WAYS TO HELP CONSTIPATION

There are many effective ways to get your bowels moving again. It is critical you discuss your constipation with your healthcare provider to get treatment recommendations that are safe and effective for your individual case. For pregnancy, first-line therapies for constipation include increasing fibre content (which comes from fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, and nuts and seeds) and increasing hydration. Additionally, gentle movement such as stretching and brisk walking can be beneficial as they stimulate peristalsis—the natural contractions of the intestinal muscles—which can help get things moving again.[5] These lifestyle methods are also helpful for the postpartum period, as long as you are moving your body in a way that feels right for you and your postpartum recovery.[6] If you find them ineffective, certain laxatives can be used during both pregnancy and postpartum and are commonly prescribed along with stool softeners in a hospital setting after labour.[5,6]

The most popular kinds of laxatives used are osmotic laxatives (e.g., magnesium citrate or oxide) and stimulating laxatives (e.g., senna), which have been assessed for safety in pregnancy particularly. While they are not systemically absorbed, laxatives in general should only be used in the short term in pregnancy and postpartum.[6] More research is needed to confirm effectiveness and safety of laxatives in both the pregnancy and postpartum periods.[4] It's also important to be aware of the fact that everyone reacts to laxatives differently—osmotic laxatives tend to be more gentle, as they bring fluid into the lumen of the bowels, whereas stimulating laxatives can sometimes cause cramping, as they engage peristalsis.[5]

Lastly, for constipation in both the pregnancy and postpartum periods, it's critical not to ignore the urge. The longer stool sits in the bowels, the harder and drier it gets, so going as soon as you feel the need to is a great way to avoid constipation.[7]

Constipation is a very common ailment in pregnancy and postpartum. Common culprits include hormonal shifts, suboptimal nutrition and hydration, and anatomical changes. While it's often not cause for concern, it's always important to get checked by your healthcare provider and receive tailored treatment strategies that will be safe and effective for you. The good news is there are safe and minimally invasive treatment strategies to help get things moving again in no time.

For references visit *ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM26*



Pregnancy is a nutritionally demanding stage of life. From preconception through pregnancy and breastfeeding, a woman's body requires increased levels of essential vitamins, minerals, and omega fats to support both maternal health and optimal fetal development.

For over 30 years, Platinum Naturals has been a trusted Canadian brand, offering clean, thoughtfully formulated supplements. Their complete prenatal lineup is designed to support women at every stage, whether trying to conceive, pregnant, or breastfeeding. The formulas feature the Omega Absorb™ delivery system, which uses healthy oils to enhance nutrient absorption so your body can better utilize what it needs every day.

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Prenatal EasyCal® Calcium:

Although multivitamins provide many key nutrients, calcium is best absorbed when taken separately. Prenatal EasyCal® Calcium includes magnesium, vitamin C, and vitamin D to support calcium absorption and metabolism. Magnesium also helps reduce leg cramps, while vitamins C and D play an important role in collagen production and healthy bone development.

Prenatal Omega-3 DHA:

Omega-3 fats are essential for the development of an infant's brain and central nervous system. Since many women do not consume enough DHA through diet alone, supplementation can be especially beneficial. Prenatal Omega-3 DHA provides 525 mg of DHA per softgel and is molecularly distilled for purity and quality.

Prenatal Anti-Nausea:

Nausea and vomiting are common during pregnancy, especially in the first trimester. Prenatal Anti-Nausea offers targeted support with a combination of ginger and vitamin B6 carried in ginger oil to help manage symptoms in an easy to swallow softgel.

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ASK THE CHIROPRACTOR

Can you see a chiropractor while pregnant?

DEBUNKING THE MYTH

Dr. Daina Patel, BSc, DC

AndreyPopov / depositphotos.com

Pregnancy is one of the most transformative experiences a body can go through. As a chiropractor, I see this commonly in my practice: Patients come in excited, nervous, hopeful, and often uncomfortable. They want to do what's best for their growing baby while also trying to stay mobile, strong, and pain-free. I work with families every day, and I have watched parents navigate the physical and emotional shifts that come with pregnancy and postpartum life.

I hear the same question over and over again: *Is it safe to see a chiropractor while pregnant?* The short answer is yes. The longer answer is that chiropractic care can be an incredibly supportive part of a healthy pregnancy when delivered by someone trained in prenatal techniques. My goal is to help parents understand what that looks like, why it matters, and how to make informed choices that feel right for their bodies and their families.

CHIROPRACTIC & PREGNANCY

Pregnancy changes everything about how the body moves and functions. Hormones increase joint laxity. Posture shifts as the centre of gravity moves forward. Muscles work harder to stabilize the pelvis and spine. These changes are normal, but they can also create discomfort. Low back pain, pelvic pain, rib restrictions, and sciatica are some of the most common concerns I see in pregnant patients.

> CHIROPRACTIC CARE DURING PREGNANCY ISN'T ABOUT FORCING ANYTHING INTO PLACE. IT'S ABOUT SUPPORTING THE BODY AS IT ADAPTS.

Chiropractic care focuses on restoring mobility in the joints and reducing tension in the surrounding muscles. During pregnancy, this work becomes more specific. A chiropractor trained in prenatal care uses techniques that are gentle, safe, and adapted to the changing body. This often includes side-lying adjustments, drop-table techniques, soft-tissue therapy, and pelvic balancing.

One of the most well-known approaches is the Webster Technique, a method that focuses on the alignment of the pelvis and the surrounding ligaments. When the pelvis moves well, the uterus has more space to sit comfortably, reducing tension and improving overall comfort. Many patients tell me they feel lighter, more balanced, and more mobile after treatment.

Chiropractic care during pregnancy isn't about forcing anything into place. It's about supporting the body as it adapts. When the spine and pelvis move well, the nervous system functions more efficiently. This can help with sleep, mobility, and overall well-being. It also prepares the body for labour by encouraging optimal pelvic mechanics.

Safety is always the priority. Chiropractors who work with pregnant patients are trained to avoid pressure on the abdomen, modify positions, and recognize when a patient needs referral to another provider. Collaboration with midwives, obstetricians, pelvic floor physiotherapists, and doulas is common in my practice. Pregnancy care works best when everyone is communicating and supporting the same goals.

TIPS FOR INCREASING COMFORT

Chiropractic care is only one part of the picture. Many simple habits can make pregnancy and postpartum recovery more comfortable. These are the tips I share most often with my patients.

Before & During Pregnancy

1. **Prioritize pelvic mobility.** Gentle stretching, prenatal yoga, and daily movement help keep the pelvis balanced. Even five minutes of mobility work can make a difference.
2. **Strengthen the deep core and glutes.** These muscles support the spine and pelvis. A pelvic floor physiotherapist can help you learn safe exercises for each trimester.
3. **Use supportive pillows for sleep.** A pillow between the knees and one under the belly can reduce strain on the hips and lower back.
4. **Pay attention to posture.** As the belly grows, it's easy to lean back or shift weight to one side. Small adjustments throughout the day can reduce discomfort.
5. **Stay hydrated.** Ligaments and discs respond better to movement when the body is well hydrated.

After Pregnancy

Postpartum recovery is often overlooked, but it's just as important as prenatal care. The body has gone through a major physical event and needs time and support to heal.

1. **Ease back into movement.** Walking is a great place to start. Avoid high-impact exercise until cleared by your healthcare team.
2. **Support the core and pelvic floor.** Many new parents experience abdominal separation or pelvic floor weakness. A pelvic floor physiotherapist can assess and guide recovery.
3. **Be mindful of feeding posture.** Whether breastfeeding or bottle feeding, long hours spent in one position can strain the neck, shoulders, and upper back. Pillows and proper support can help.
4. **Lift with intention.** Babies grow quickly. Learning to lift with a neutral spine and strong legs can prevent injury.
5. **Continue chiropractic care if helpful.** Many postpartum patients find that gentle adjustments help restore mobility and reduce tension from feeding, carrying, and lack of sleep.



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Yan Krukau / Pexels.com

WHEN TO SEEK CHIROPRACTIC CARE

While many people seek care because of pain, you don't need to wait until discomfort becomes overwhelming. Chiropractic care can be preventative. It can also be part of a broader wellness plan during pregnancy.

You may benefit from seeing a chiropractor if you notice:

» Persistent low back or pelvic pain
» Difficulty walking or standing for long periods
» Rib or mid-back discomfort
» Sciatic pain
» A feeling of imbalance or instability in the pelvis
» Discomfort that interferes with sleep

If anything feels unusual or concerning, a chiropractor trained in prenatal care will know when to refer you to another provider. Your safety and your baby's safety always come first.

Pregnancy is a time of constant change, and everybody experiences it differently. Chiropractic care offers a gentle, supportive way to help the body adapt to those changes. It can reduce discomfort, improve mobility, and support overall well-being throughout pregnancy and into the postpartum period.

My goal as a chiropractor is to help parents feel informed, confident, and comfortable in their bodies. When patients understand their options, they can make choices that align with their values and their health goals. Chiropractic care is one of many tools available to support a healthy pregnancy, and when used thoughtfully, it can make a meaningful difference in how someone feels during this important chapter of life.

For references, visit *ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM26*

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The Evolution of Skincare Ingredients

A New Standard for Clean Beauty

Jennifer Freitas



Daiga Ellaby / Unsplash+

The year 2010 was really the beginning of what came to be known as the "clean beauty movement," but like with anything that evolves, we've witnessed the industry undergo a dramatic shift. What began as a niche movement centred on avoiding synthetic ingredients evolved into a sophisticated demand surrounding the transparency of ingredients used in personal care products. Clean beauty today is not simply about being natural. It now relies on using the most effective ingredients available, whether sourced from nature or created through advanced science.

Botanical Beauty Ingredients

At its outset, clean beauty was largely defined by what was not contained in the bottle; products emphasized what they were free from (e.g., parabens, petrochemicals, and synthetic fragrance).

Consumers demanded familiar botanical ingredients such as shea butter, jojoba oil, beeswax, and aloe vera, to name but a few; these ingredients felt safe and were derived from nature. Formulations were simple; however, while natural, they lacked the stability, texture, and performance of conventional skincare. As a result, a more balanced approach began to emerge.

> PRESENT-DAY FORMULATIONS NOW BLEND NATURAL INGREDIENTS WITH BIOTECHNOLOGY TO CREATE PRODUCTS THAT ARE BOTH HIGH PERFORMING AND SUSTAINABLE.

The New Natural

Some brands began incorporating safe, lab-supported ingredients that offered targeted benefits like hydration, barrier repair, and skin resilience, introducing the idea that nature and science could work as one rather than in opposition. Some of these ingredients include:

Peptides: Short-chained amino acids that build proteins. They provide anti-inflammatory support and can help slow down signs of aging.[1]

Hyaluronic acid: A substance that is naturally produced by the human body. It's in our eyes, joints, and skin and is known for its ability to retain moisture.[2]

Niacinamide: A form of vitamin B3 that is used for acne, aging skin, and skin discolouration.[3]

Ceramides: Lipids (fats) found in the skin that hold our skin cells together and protect our skin barrier from things like sun damage and the effects of aging.[4]



Daiga Ellaby / Unsplash+

By the mid-2010s, consumers' conversations had shifted from avoidance to transparency, and so the shift really began to solidify. Clean beauty became less about fearmongering and more about fostering informed choices.

Indie brands led this movement by clearly communicating what was in their formulas and why. At the same time, formulations became more advanced. Botanical diversity expanded to include ingredients like algaes, phyto-nutrients, and adaptogenic plants. Improved natural emulsifiers allowed for more refined, stable textures that better met consumer expectations. Clean beauty began to feel less like a compromise and more like a standard.

The industry has continued to innovate, though: Present-day formulations now blend natural ingredients with biotechnology to create products that are both high performing and sustainable.

One of the most important shifts has been how certain ingredients are produced:

Ceramides were once sourced from animal tissues or extracted in small amounts from plants like wheat or rice. These methods made consistency and purity difficult to control. Today, ceramides are created in labs using biotechnology to produce molecules that are identical to those naturally found in the skin. This allows for greater stability, improved performance, and a more sustainable approach.

Niacinamide has undergone a similar evolution. It was once derived through more resource-intensive extraction methods but is now produced through controlled synthesis or fermentation, resulting in a highly pure, stable ingredient that the skin can easily recognize and utilize. This precision not only improves efficacy but also reduces the variability that can come with naturally sourced raw materials.

Hyaluronic acid was once extracted from rooster combs. Today, a more ethical alternative is microbial fermentation, where plant-based sources like wheat and corn are fermented to create high-purity hyaluronic acid.[5]

Probiotics have long been touted as beneficial for our internal health, and now there is also growing interest in the skin microbiome. We're seeing ingredients like prebiotics and probiotics being incorporated into formulas to support skin health.

And as much as the term "clean beauty" can be misconstrued, the movement ensured that natural ingredients remain at the heart of present-day personal care formulations.

Clean beauty has moved beyond being a trend and into a guiding philosophy for the industry. Consumers no longer have to choose between natural and effective. Now, they can have both.

For references visit *ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM26*

Skincare at its Roots

The New Standard of Skincare Is Natural & High Performing

Skincare ingredients have evolved from exclusively botanical to biotechnology backed. Today's products combine natural with scientifically enhanced ingredients to create high-performing and sustainable creams, toners, and serums that hydrate, heal, and protect. You can feel good about what you're putting on your skin and know that each product is engineered to optimize your skin health.



MEDICUBE
–Zero Foam Cleanser

Made with naturally derived ingredients like wintergreen leaf extract–a natural salicylic acid that gently removes oil–this cleanser washes away microdust after a single use. It also helps reduce puffy eyes and dark circles and minimize signs of aging.



MEDICUBE
–PDRN Pink Hyaluronic Moisturizing Cream

Designed to improve wrinkle appearance and brighten dull skin, this moisturizing cream contains niacinamide, ceramides, peptides, and 10 types of hyaluronic acid. It also contains PDRN (polydeoxyribonucleotide), a DNA compound derived from salmon, which supports uneven skin tone and hydrates to protect the skin barrier.



COSRX
–The Niacinamide 15 Serum

This highly concentrated (15% niacinamide) serum helps minimize acne and blemishes and can be applied morning, afternoon, and evening. Just be sure to apply sunscreen with an SPF of 30 if using during the day.





SKIN1004
–Centella Toning Toner

Mild enough for daily use, this toner contains niacinamide and hyaluronic acid and is suitable for sensitive skin. Centella extract is known for boosting collagen production, reducing inflammation, and protecting the skin barrier.

ROUND LAB
–Dokdo Eye Cream

Formulated with mineral-rich water from Dokdo Island in South Korea, this eye cream also contains eight types of hyaluronic acid for deep hydration and niacinamide to help brighten the skin and reduce the appearance of fine lines.



BIODANCE
–Bio-Collagen Real Deep Mask

Oligo-hyaluronic acid penetrates the skin's layers to provide deeper hydration than traditional hyaluronic acid. Niacinamide and galactomyces brighten the skin and improve uneven skin tone and texture, while low molecular collagen reduces fine lines and increases skin elasticity.



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with collagen and electrolytes to fuel your body all day



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- Bloat-Free Confidence
- Gentle on Your Gut

ORGANIKA

The Benefits of Meal Prep

Save Time. Eat Better.

Angela Moscarelli, RHN



Ella Olsson / Pexels.com

Meal prep is a powerful way to support healthy eating habits, reduce mealtime stress, and save both time and money. Yet for many people, the idea of meal prepping can feel overwhelming—finding the time in a busy schedule and knowing where to begin can be a real challenge. I get it—I've been there. As a working mom of four, I know firsthand how hectic life can be, and I also know that for meal prep to be successful, it has to be realistic and sustainable. No matter your lifestyle, meal prepping doesn't have to mean spending your entire weekend in the kitchen. With a few simple strategies and a smarter approach, you can make meal prep work for you. These easy, practical ideas will help you save time in the kitchen, reduce daily decision-making, and enjoy nourishing, balanced meals—without the stress.

VEGAN MEAL PREP IDEAS

A common misconception is that vegetarians and vegans don't get enough protein in their diets, but plants, in fact, offer amazing health benefits. Meal prep can be a great way to ensure that protein needs are met through a variety of high-protein plant sources and by combining plant sources (e.g., combining nuts, seeds, or grains with legumes) to form "complete" plant proteins.

Most plant-based proteins are what we call "incomplete" proteins, meaning they don't contain all nine essential amino acids our bodies need. So combining two or more types of protein in the same meal provides the body with all the essential amino acids it requires. These are called complementary proteins.

High-Protein Plant Foods

Consider meal prepping one or two high-protein plant foods to ensure you meet all your daily protein needs. Marinate seitan, tofu, or tempeh in tamari, and cook it up in the air-fryer or oven. Make two to three portions for the week and pair with veggies, whole grains, and a sprinkle of hemp seeds for a complete, balanced meal.

Smoothie freezer packs: Add a combination of fruit, veggies, and plant protein powder into reusable freezer-safe bags and store in the freezer for up to three months. Reserve your liquid for when it's time to blend up and serve.

Complementary Proteins

Consider batch prepping beans and whole grains to be combined to form complete proteins. Cook up a large batch to store in the fridge for up to four days and freeze leftovers.

Batch prep whole grains: Wild rice, quinoa, and spelt are higher in protein than other grains but require longer cooking times, which makes them a great option for meal prep.

Batch prep dry beans or lentils: High in protein and fibre, beans and lentils contain beneficial plant compounds and may reduce your chances of heart disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer.

LUNCH MEAL PREP IDEAS

If you're a busy professional, full-time student, or stay-at-home parent who often finds themselves skipping lunch or resorting to fast food, lunch meal prep is for you! Having a meal that's already prepped and ready to enjoy saves time and money and ensures you're going to enjoy a healthy, balanced meal.

Mason Jar Salads

Ingredients are beautifully layered in glass jars, keeping them fresh and crisp for up to four days without getting soggy. The key is in the layering. Add the dressing to the bottom of the jar, followed by the protein, layer in beans, veggies, fruits, and reserve the leafy greens, nuts and/or seeds for the top. When ready to enjoy, empty the contents of the jar into a bowl, mix to combine, and enjoy!

Preppable Protein Fillings

Chopped egg, chicken, or tuna salad can be prepared in advance and is perfect in sandwiches, stuffed into a pita, or served over leafy greens, baked potatoes, or rice. Prepare three to four servings in advance for the week, and mix up how you serve them.

DINNER MEAL PREP IDEAS

Getting a healthy, balanced dinner on the table during a hectic weeknight can be a struggle, but having a fully cooked meal or ingredients ready to go in the fridge can be a real time saver.

Ingredients with Long Cook Times

Whole grains like brown rice, starchy vegetables like potatoes and squash, and dry beans like chickpeas and kidney beans can take longer to cook, so having them already prepped is a great time saver, and you'll have perfect side dishes or part of your main dish ready to go. Personally, I like to rotate between different grains, beans, and starchy vegetables each week to ensure my family is getting a variety of plants and therefore a variety of vitamins and minerals in our diets.

Low & Slow Batch Cooking

Get out your slow cooker or instant pot and spend some time on the weekend preparing an extra-large batch of soup, stew, chili, or curry. These dishes reheat well and are freezer-friendly. Enjoy one batch the same day you prepare it, and the second batch on a day during the week when all you have time for is a simple reheat. Making multiple servings only takes a few extra minutes of prep time and planning to ensure you have enough ingredients, then you can cook once and eat two (or three) times!



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STRESS LESS & SAVE TIME

When you begin to prioritize meal prep, you may be surprised to find that it actually gives you more time—not less. Spending just 30 minutes to an hour meal prepping can save hours during the week, reduce daily stress around meals, and make healthy eating feel far more achievable. By keeping meal prep flexible, realistic, and aligned with your lifestyle, it becomes a sustainable habit that supports both your busy schedule and your long-term health goals.

Try This Recipe!

MAKES 3 JARS

MASON JAR TACO SALAD WITH A CREAMY SOUTHWEST DRESSING

The perfect grab-and-go lunch for meal prep. It stays fresh and crisp in the fridge for up to four days, and it satisfies your cravings for takeout.

Dressing Ingredients

- ½ c tahini (ground sesame seeds)
- 2 Tbsp pure maple syrup
- 1 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 3 Tbsp fresh lime juice (approx. 2 limes)
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp chili powder
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper (optional)
- ¼ c warm water, or more as needed

Salad Ingredients

- 2 cans black beans (398 mL), drained and rinsed
- 3 tsp chili powder
- 3 tsp garlic powder
- 3 tsp paprika
- 1½ tsp sea salt
- 1½ c corn kernels
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 6 Tbsp salsa
- ½ red onion, finely diced
- 3 small tomatoes, chopped
- 3 c chopped romaine lettuce
- Avocado, cilantro, tortilla chips (optional)

Instructions

1. Combine all the ingredients for the dressing (except for the water) in a large measuring cup or jar and whisk to combine fully. Add warm water as needed, 1 tablespoon at a time, until the desired consistency is reached. Set aside.

2. Drain and rinse the black beans and add them to a large bowl together with the chili powder, garlic powder, paprika, sea salt and mix to combine.

3. To assemble the mason jars, divide the ingredients evenly between three large mason jars. Start with the dressing, next add the seasoned beans, and layer in corn, peppers, salsa, onion, tomatoes, and lettuce. Top with your optional toppings of choice.



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The Healthy Kitchen

Beat the Heat with Oven-Free Cooking

Angela Moscarelli, RHN



Serves 1

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anna guerrero / Pexels.com

Illustration: vectorgoods.gmail.com / Depositphotos.com

Tiramisu Chia Pudding

For those who can't get enough coffee in the morning, this is your breakfast. Packed with fibre from the ground flax and chia seeds (which can absorb up to 10 times their weight in water!), and protein and probiotics from the yogurt, this chia pudding will help keep you fuller longer. A pinch of cinnamon adds flavour while balancing blood sugar, and a dusting of cocoa before serving offers a complete tiramisu experience.

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp chia seeds
- 1 tsp ground flax
- ¼ c strong coffee
- ¾ c Greek yogurt
- 1 Tbsp pure maple syrup
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp pure vanilla extract
- Pinch sea salt
- 1 tsp cocoa powder for dusting
- 1 scoop collagen powder (*optional*)

Instructions

1. Add all the ingredients to a bowl (except for the cocoa powder), and mix well to combine. Wait 5 minutes and mix again. Cover and set in the fridge for at least 4 hours or overnight.
2. Before serving, add a dusting of cocoa powder on top.

Quinoa & Kale Southwest Salad

This salad will quickly become your favourite summer recipe and the most requested salad from friends and family. It's filled with delicious flavours and textures, and the dressing is seriously addictive. It also keeps well in the fridge for days, which makes this recipe perfect for meal prep.

Dressing Ingredients

- 6 Tbsp fresh lime juice
- 6 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 7 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 3 Tbsp raw honey
- 1 Tbsp chili powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- 2 tsp cumin powder
- ½ tsp cayenne powder or ancho chili powder (optional)
- 2 tsp sea salt (or to taste)

Salad Ingredients

- 4 c cooked quinoa
- 2 c finely chopped kale
- 3 c black beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 c chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 c frozen corn, thawed
- 2 c diced red pepper
- ½ c red onion, finely chopped
- 1 bunch fresh cilantro, chopped
- ½ jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced (*optional*)
- Chopped avocado for serving (*optional*)

Instructions

1. In a large jar or measuring cup, combine all the ingredients for the dressing and mix well to combine.
2. Add all the salad ingredients to a large bowl and mix to combine.
3. Add half of the salad dressing, mix to combine, and add the remaining dressing before you are ready to serve.



NewAfrica / Depositphotos.com

Serves 8-10



bhofack2 / Depositphotos.com

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Lemon-Coconut Energy Bites

Lemon and coconut together make for a fabulous flavour pairing. Naturally sweetened with dates and coconut, there's no need for added sweeteners. Make a batch of these energy bites and store them in the fridge or freezer for a quick summer treat.

Ingredients

- 1 c unsweetened shredded coconut, divided
- 1 c pitted dates (soaked in warm water)
- Juice and zest of 2 lemons
- 2 ½ c rolled oats
- ¼ c coconut flour
- 2 Tbsp chia seeds
- ¼ c coconut oil, melted
- Pinch sea salt

Instructions

1. Add ½ cup shredded coconut to a shallow bowl, and set aside.
2. Break up the dates and add them to a food processor together with the lemon juice. Reserve the soaking water from the dates.
3. Blend just until the dates are combined and form a paste. Add a splash of reserved soaking water from the dates if necessary.
4. Add the remaining ingredients and pulse just until combined.
5. With wet hands, shape into 1-inch balls and roll each one in shredded coconut to coat. Store in an airtight container in the fridge or freezer.





Iced Blueberry Refresher

Most conventional sports and electrolyte drinks contain harmful dyes, artificial flavours, and refined sweeteners. This blueberry refresher contains natural electrolytes from the coconut water, including potassium, sodium, and magnesium, as well as sodium chloride from sea salt. Blueberries and lime juice provide antioxidants, which can protect cells from damage, support overall health, and may reduce inflammation. When plain water is just not enough, try reaching for this healthy alternative instead.

Ingredients

- ⅓ c fresh blueberries
- 1–2 tsp fresh lime juice
- 1 tsp pure maple syrup
- Pinch sea salt
- Cubed ice
- 250–500 ml coconut water

Instructions

1. Add the blueberries, lime juice, maple syrup, and sea salt to a mason jar, and gently muddle so the blueberries release their juices.
2. Add ice, then pour in coconut water.
3. Screw on the lid, shake to combine, and enjoy!





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1. Mitmesser S, Combs M, Evans M. Determinations of plasma and leukocyte ascorbate concentrations in a randomized, double-blind trial. FASEB Jounal. 2014 Apr; vol 28 no 1 supplement 830.3.

release your inner strength SiSU

Ice Cream vs. Strawberry-Chocolate Yogurt Parfait

Indulge without the sugar crash!

Maria D'Alessandro, RHN

Craving something sweet and comforting doesn't mean you have to sacrifice how your body feels afterward. Many classic desserts, like ice cream, are designed for indulgence, but they often leave us with very little nutritional value.

Traditional Choice:

Traditional ice cream is often made with refined sugar, heavy cream, and additives that can spike blood sugar and trigger inflammation. While it tastes indulgent, it offers very little in terms of fibre, protein, or micronutrients, meaning it digests quickly and can leave you feeling sluggish, bloated, or craving more sweets soon after. Regularly choosing ice cream as a dessert can contribute to energy crashes, gut discomfort, and imbalanced blood sugar, especially for those already navigating hormonal or metabolic challenges.

The Swap:

Swapping ice cream for a strawberry-chocolate yogurt parfait satisfies your dessert craving while giving you more nourishment. Plain Greek yogurt provides protein and probiotics to support digestion, reduce bloating, and slow sugar absorption for steadier blood sugar. Chocolate protein powder adds extra protein to keep energy stable and prevent post-dessert crashes, while cacao powder delivers antioxidants that help combat inflammation without added sugar. Strawberries bring natural sweetness, fibre, and vitamin C to support gut health and minimize blood sugar spikes. Pumpkin seeds add a satisfying crunch along with healthy fats, magnesium, and zinc, which reduce inflammation and promote healthy digestion. A sprinkle of granola adds fibre to further support digestion and fullness. Together, this combo satisfies cravings while supporting balanced energy, a happier gut, and more stable blood sugar, without the crash.



hello aesthe / Unsplash+

Strawberry-Chocolate Yogurt Parfait

SERVES 2

Ingredients

- 2 c plain Greek yogurt
- ¼ c chocolate protein powder
- 1 Tbsp cacao powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1 c strawberries
- ¼ c pumpkin seeds
- Granola (optional)

Instructions

1. Add the yogurt, protein powder, cacao powder, vanilla extract, and cinnamon to a large bowl. Mix until all ingredients are combined.
2. Pour into a jar of your choosing. Top with strawberries, pumpkin seeds, and granola (if desired).

Prep time: 10 minutes



Illustration: sergeypykhonin / Depositphotos.com

The Swap Roundup



Quest
Chocolate Protein Powder

Kosher, Gluten-Free

Purely Elizabeth
Ancient Grain Berry Crisp Granola

With Vitamin D





Benefits by Nature
Organic Cacao Powder

Source of Iron, Fibre, Magnesium

Benefits by Nature
Organic Pumpkin Seeds

Source of Plant-Based Protein



The Family Table

Protein-Packed Recipes to Fuel Your Canada Day

Dr. Sarah White, ND



Maryam Sicard / Unsplash+



Natalia Blauth / Unsplash+

Illustration: geraria / Depositphotos.com

Grilled Vegetable Protein Salad

This grilled vegetable and quinoa salad celebrates all the fresh flavours of early summer and contains an amazing 30+ grams of plant protein per serving. Packed with colourful summer vegetables like zucchini, bell peppers, and asparagus, along with quinoa (a complete protein), chickpeas, and grilled tofu, this salad is super filling and full of protein. Completely plant-based, this salad is an amazing choice for a Canada Day outdoor celebration—especially since the lack of dairy and animal products means it's less likely to spoil in the heat.

SERVES 6

Dressing Ingredients

» ¼ c olive oil
» 4 cloves crushed garlic
» 1 tsp Dijon mustard
» 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
» Salt and pepper to taste

Salad Ingredients

» 1 block firm tofu, chopped into 1-inch cubes
» 1 zucchini, chopped into 1-inch pieces
» 1 red bell pepper, chopped into 1-inch pieces
» 1 c asparagus, chopped into 1-inch pieces
» 1 c cooked quinoa
» 1 can BPA-free chickpeas, rinsed
» ½ c fresh basil, chopped

Instructions

1. Preheat a BBQ or indoor grill to medium heat.

2. Make the dressing by combining the olive oil, garlic, mustard, vinegar, and salt and pepper in a small mason jar, and shake until well mixed.

3. Toss half of the dressing in a bowl with the tofu and vegetables, then grill for about 10 minutes, stirring frequently until tender and slightly charred.

4. In a large bowl, combine the grilled veggies and tofu with the cooked quinoa, chickpeas, basil, and remaining dressing. Toss gently before serving.

Tip: Grill your vegetables in a BBQ-safe grill basket if cooking outdoors.



PantherMediaSeller / Depositphotos.com

Mint Zucchini Ribbon Salad
With Toasted Pine Nuts

You can never have too many fresh salads at a Canada Day celebration! This zucchini ribbon salad is a zingy and refreshing balance to the heavier proteins of the quinoa salad. Ribboned zucchini is not only beautiful but also low in calories and high in fibre and vitamins A and C. Fresh mint is considered a cooling herb to help keep you fresh on hot summer days.

SERVES 4

Ingredients

» ¼ c pine nuts, toasted
» 2 medium zucchinis, thinly sliced into ribbons
» ¼ c fresh mint leaves, chopped
» Juice of 1 lemon
» 2 tsp lemon zest (always choose unwaxed organic lemons when using the peel)
» 2 Tbsp olive oil
» Salt and pepper to taste
» ¼ c goat cheese or soft cashew cheese

Instructions

1. In a dry skillet over medium heat, toast the pine nuts for about 3–5 minutes until golden brown, stirring frequently to prevent burning. Remove from heat and set aside.

2. In a large bowl, combine the zucchini ribbons (use a mandolin to achieve uniform thin slices), toasted pine nuts, and chopped mint.

3. Drizzle with lemon juice and olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and top with crumbed goat cheese or cashew cheese.

4. Toss gently to combine, ensuring the zucchini is well coated. Serve immediately, or let it chill in the refrigerator for 20 minutes to enhance the flavours before serving.



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Illustration: geraria / Depositphotos.com



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SERVES 4

Lemon-Herb Grilled Chicken Skewers

These lemony grilled chicken skewers are a zesty high-protein option for any summer gathering. Marinating is critical when it comes to summer cooking, and these chicken skewers are marinated in olive oil, fresh herbs, and lemon juice—a combo that has been shown to prevent the creation of cancer-causing compounds (specifically heterocyclic amines and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons) that develop when meat is cooked at high temperatures.[1] Research shows that marinating for at least 30 minutes can significantly reduce these carcinogenic compounds.[2]

Ingredients

- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 tsp fresh oregano, chopped
- 2 tsp fresh rosemary, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 lb chicken breast, cubed

Instructions

1. In a bowl, mix olive oil, lemon juice, herbs, garlic, salt, and pepper. Add the chicken cubes, and marinate for at least 40 minutes.
2. Preheat the grill to medium-high heat. While you're waiting, thread the marinated chicken onto skewers.
3. Grill the skewers for 10–12 minutes, turning occasionally, until the chicken is cooked through.
4. Garnish with fresh parsley before serving.

For references visit *ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM26*

Canada Day Parfait

This beautiful red-and-white dessert is a healthy way to celebrate the colours of the Canadian flag. Greek yogurt is not only creamy and delicious but also an excellent source of high-quality protein, making it a perfect option for fueling your Canada Day celebration. Sweetened with pure maple syrup, it's sweet without excessive sugar, while bright red berries provide essential vitamins, antioxidants, and fibre.

Ingredients

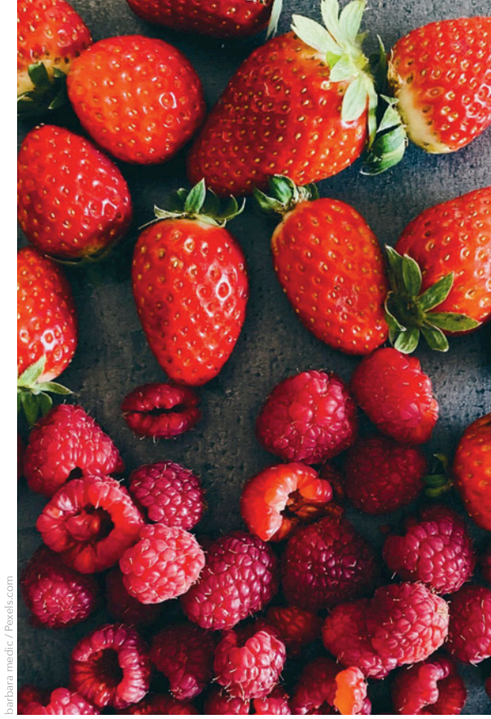
- 2 c Greek yogurt (plain or vanilla)
- 2 Tbsp pure maple syrup (adjust to taste)
- 1 c mixed red berries (like strawberries and raspberries)
- ¼ c granola (gluten-free if desired)

Instructions

1. In a bowl, mix the Greek yogurt with maple syrup until well combined. Adjust the sweetness according to your preference.
2. In serving glasses or bowls, layer the yogurt mixture with a handful of mixed berries and a sprinkle of granola. Repeat the layering process until the glasses are filled, finishing with a layer of berries and a dollop of yogurt on top.







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SERVES 2

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DID YOU KNOW?

Cinnamon

An Ancient Spice with Modern Healing Powers

Quinn Carlan, CNP

Olivie Strauss / Unsplash+

Long before the latest wellness trends and CGM blood sugar monitors, there was cinnamon. Warm and deeply grounding, cinnamon has been used for thousands of years as both food and medicine. Today, modern research continues to validate what ancient medicine has known all along: This aromatic spice offers powerful support for metabolism, inflammation, and digestion.

HISTORY

The name "cinnamon" comes from the Arabic term amomon, which means fragrant spice plant. It's known for its sweet, warm, and woody flavour and is derived from the dried inner bark of Cinnamomum trees. The bark is peeled, dried, and rolled into strips or ground into a powder.

Ceylon cinnamon, often referred to as "true" cinnamon (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*), is native to the island of Ceylon, known today as Sri Lanka. Cinnamon was one of the earliest spices traded in the ancient world. It was considered to be extremely valuable, sometimes worth as much as gold or ivory. Ancient Egyptians used it in embalming, rituals, and perfumes, and during the Middle Ages, doctors used it to treat colds and throat problems.[1]

HEALTH BENEFITS

Beyond its rich history, cinnamon's staying power lies in its wide range of health benefits, many of which are relevant in today's fast-paced, stress-filled world.

Blood Sugar Balance

One of cinnamon's most well-known benefits is its ability to support healthy blood sugar regulation. Research suggests cinnamon helps improve insulin sensitivity and reduce post-meal blood sugar spikes. From a holistic perspective, this can be incredibly supportive for stable energy levels, hormone balance, and reducing the rollercoaster of cravings and crashes that many people experience throughout the day. For individuals dealing with metabolic disease, chronic stress, or adrenal dysfunction, even small daily amounts of cinnamon can be a gentle yet effective tool.[2]

With the surge of GLP-1 agonist drugs (like Ozempic), the conversation about appetite control and blood sugar balance seems to be everywhere. GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide 1) is responsible for improving insulin response to keep blood sugar stable and reducing glucose production to lower blood sugar levels.[3]

Bitter herbs, like Ceylon cinnamon, contain compounds such as cinnamaldehyde that trigger the release of GLP-1 while also supporting digestion when added to food or drink. This means that a small daily dose of cinnamon in cooking, baking, or added to a beverage, can promote healthy blood sugar balance!

Antioxidant & Anti-Inflammatory

Another key benefit of cinnamon lies in its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Cinnamon is rich in polyphenols, like procyanidins, which are compounds that help neutralize oxidative stress and reduce inflammation at a cellular level. Chronic inflammation is at the root of many modern health concerns, including gut dysfunction, skin issues, and hormonal imbalances. Incorporating anti-inflammatory spices like cinnamon into daily meals can be a simple, food-based approach to supporting long-term health and vitality.[4]

Nervous System Balance

Cinnamon offers subtle yet meaningful support for the nervous system. Its comforting flavour profile can help promote a sense of calm, particularly during periods of high stress or emotional depletion. From a holistic lens, cinnamon is associated with vitality, circulation, and warmth, qualities that can feel nourishing during colder months or times of burnout. Its warming and stimulating properties make it an excellent choice for individuals who feel fatigued, cold, or sluggish.

For references visit *ecoparent.ca/ELV/ESUM26*

Cozy Vanilla Cinnamon Latte

An aromatic vanilla and cinnamon latte that's easy to make at home, combining rich coffee, warm spices, and smooth milk. Grounding, in a cup!

INGREDIENTS

» 1 c brewed coffee
» ½ c milk (dairy or plant-based)
» 1 tsp vanilla extract
» ½ tsp Ceylon cinnamon
» 1 tsp honey (optional)
» Cinnamon stick or vanilla bean (for garnish)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Brew a cup of coffee and pour into a mug.
2. Heat the milk until steaming, then add vanilla extract and cinnamon, stirring well.
3. Froth the milk using a frother, or whisk until airy.
4. Pour the frothed milk into the brewed coffee, stirring gently.
5. Sweeten with honey or maple syrup, if desired.
6. Top with a sprinkle of cinnamon, and garnish with a cinnamon stick or a vanilla bean. Enjoy!

DID YOU KNOW? Roundup

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–Kosher–





SIMPLY ORGANIC
Pure Madagascar Vanilla Extract
–Non-GMO–

CALIFIA
Almond Beverage
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Grains and nuts are a winning duo that promotes heart health, increases energy, helps prevent diseases, and provides tons of fibre, healthy fats, and vitamins and minerals. Mix and match these versatile foods to find the combo that works best for you. Plus, a drizzle of something sweet turns a savoury meal into a brain-boosting dessert. Enjoy!

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