

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S Herbal Legacy Newsletter

April 10, 2013

Spring Fever and Adaptogens -Jo Francks MH

After a long winter it feels great to get out in the fresh air again. Here in Utah the snow has melted and signs of spring have been showing themselves. This is the time for planting gardens, yard work, physical exertion, outdoor activities and more. After the silent stillness of



winter it is wonderful to hear the birds sing and the crickets chirp. It is all so energizing. During these times of increased physical activity, we can benefit from using a group of herbs that Dr. Christopher taught a lot about; adaptogen herbs.

Adaptogens help bring the body into homeostasis. They help to rebalance the systems during times of change, such as transitioning to a new season. They help us

adapt to stress of all kinds whether it's physical, mental or environmental. What most of the adaptogenic herbs have in common is that they help regulate immune function, the endocrine system and the nervous system and strengthen the heart.

Here are some examples of adaptogenic herbs and a brief description of each:

Siberian Ginseng (*Eleutherococcus senticosus*) - shown to help address adrenal exhaustion and normalize cortisol production. Siberian ginseng was the first adaptogen to be scientifically studied, and it is still used by athletes to combat the physical and mental exhaustion of extreme activity. Siberian ginseng increases physical and mental performance and is known for its beneficial effect on memory, the immune system and in particular, the endocrine system. Ginseng has been shown to help people thrive in inhospitable climates and has been shown to normalize the body's response to extreme temperatures in hot or cold conditions. Ginseng is also one of the adaptogens used to help people prevent radiation sickness during cancer treatment.

Reishi Mushroom (*Ganoderma laucidum*) - used to fight allergies, to address autoimmune disorders such as chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia and as a general aid to longevity for people who are otherwise healthy.

Licorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) - has been used to regulate hormones, the adrenal glands and the pancreas. It is a mild laxative and is soothing to the throat and all mucus membranes.

Schizandra (*Schizandra chinensis*) – balances the nervous, immune, and endocrine systems; relieves anxiety, stress-induced palpitations/asthma; promotes the production of glutathione, an essential liver antioxidant and healthy liver function

Gotu Kola (*Cintella asiatica*) – known as the memory herb, also helps strengthen the heart, balance hormones and the nervous system.

Rhodiola (*Rhodiola rosea*) – this herb increases endurance and mental and physical strength, decreases fatigue and depression.

Sources:

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/26501-list-adaptogens/>

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