



Natural Health Research

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What is the Role of the Gallbladder and Supplements to Support It

Written by Taylor Woosley, Science Writer



The gallbladder is a small, pear-shaped organ located beneath the liver that plays a crucial role in maintaining health by aiding in the digestive process. The digestive system is a complex network of organs and processes that help our bodies break down and absorb nutrients from the food we eat. It begins in the mouth, where food is chewed and mixed with saliva, and continues through the esophagus, stomach, small intestine, and large intestine. The gallbladder plays a key role in the digestion of fats.

When we consume fatty foods, the gallbladder contracts and releases bile into the small intestine. Bile helps to emulsify fats, breaking them down into smaller molecules that can be easily digested and absorbed. This process aids in the absorption of important fat-soluble vitamins, such as vitamins A, D, E, and K.

Apart from its role in digestion, the gallbladder also contributes to overall health. Bile produced by the liver and stored in the gallbladder helps to eliminate waste products, including bilirubin and cholesterol, from the body. This prevents the buildup of these substances, which can be harmful if present in excessive amounts.

Caring for Your Gallbladder

To support the health of your gallbladder, it's important to adopt a healthy lifestyle and make conscious choices that promote its optimal function.

Following a balanced diet is key to maintaining a healthy gallbladder. Limiting the consumption of high-fat foods can prevent overloading the gallbladder and reduce the risk of gallstone formation. Gallstones, which are commonly comprised of undissolved cholesterol, can grow inside the gallbladder and biliary tract and may lead to gallstone disease. Instead, focus on incorporating more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins into your meals. These foods provide essential nutrients while reducing the strain on your gallbladder.

In addition to a healthy diet, certain lifestyle habits can promote gallbladder function. Maintaining a healthy weight is crucial, as obesity is a risk factor for gallstone formation. Regular exercise aids in weight management and contributes to gallbladder health. Practicing portion control and eating smaller, more frequent meals throughout the day can also alleviate stress on the gallbladder.

Exercise itself positively impacts gallbladder health. Physical activity improves digestion and prevents bile stagnation in the gallbladder, reducing the risk of gallstone formation. Engaging in activities such as walking, jogging, or cycling for at least 30 minutes a day can significantly benefit your gallbladder and overall digestive system.



Supplements for Gallbladder Health

When it comes to supporting your gallbladder, certain supplements can play a crucial role in maintaining its health. These supplements provide essential nutrients and herbal support that can promote optimal gallbladder function.

Essential Nutrients for Gallbladder Support:

1. Magnesium: Although the mechanisms of action are unclear, it has been shown that consuming adequate magnesium levels can reduce the risk of developing gallstones and improve overall gallbladder function.
2. Vitamin C: As an antioxidant, vitamin C protects the gallbladder from oxidative stress. It also helps to regulate the composition of bile in such a way that it delays crystallization of cholesterol, thereby protecting against the formation of gallstones.

Herbal Supplements that Promote Gallbladder Health:

1. Milk Thistle: Used for centuries to support liver and gallbladder health, milk thistle contains silymarin, a compound known for its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.
2. Turmeric: With its active compound curcumin, turmeric offers anti-inflammatory benefits that can help reduce gallbladder inflammation and aid in bile production, supporting overall gallbladder health. Results of an animal study using mice found that curcumin reduced gallstone formation and promoted gallbladder emptying properties.
3. Artichoke Leaf Extract: Another popular option, artichoke leaf extract promotes healthy bile flow and supports liver and gallbladder function.
4. Dandelion: A popular therapeutic herb, dandelion contains various bioactive compounds such as chlorogenic acid and luteolin, exhibit pharmacological effects against gallstone formation.

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February is National Cancer Prevention Month

The American Association for Cancer Research states that more than 40 percent of all cancers diagnosed and nearly half of all deaths from cancer in the United States can be attributed to preventable causes. We can't do anything about hereditary risks, but there are many lifestyle choices we can make to lessen our odds of developing cancer. Stay fit by exercising often. Keep a healthy weight, eat nutritious foods, and don't smoke. Limit alcohol and protect yourself from too much sun. Other actions that help to prevent cancer or catch it early include routine checkups, treating or preventing other health conditions, and knowing your risk factors. Studies have shown many dietary supplements may also play a role in cancer prevention.



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Written by Chrystal Moulton, Science Writer. Did you know that nearly 1/3 adults are considered overweight or obese in the United States? Obesity can result in chronic inflammation which in turn increases the likelihood of developing diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and hypertension. Brazil nuts are high in healthy fats and minerals, such as selenium, which can aid in the reduction of oxidative stress. [Learn more »](#)



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Written by Harold Oster, MD. Ashwagandha root, a traditional Indian medicine, contains steroid compounds with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. It is an adaptogen, which means it helps the body adapt to stress.

Results from this study suggest that a dose of 600 mg a day of ashwagandha root extract can improve cognition, energy, and mood in adults with self-reported cognitive and energy problems. [Read more »](#)

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