



For Men Only

Natural Remedies for Prostate Health

The prostate gland is located just under the bladder in a man's body. This chestnut shaped gland surrounds the beginning of the urethra in the male. It secretes a milky fluid that is discharged by excretory ducts into the urethra at the time of ejaculation. A number of health problems can develop with this important gland. The most common are inflammation of the prostate (prostatitis), enlargement or swelling of the gland (benign prostate hyperplasia or BPH) and prostate cancer. Fortunately, there are natural remedies available that can be very effective in helping most prostate problems.

Symptoms of prostate problems can include recurrent urinary tract infections, frequent need to urinate with increased urgency, difficulty urinating (including difficulty starting urination, decreased flow, or inability to urinate), painful urination, inability to sleep through the night without needing to urinate, dribbling after urination, painful ejaculation, bloody semen or sexual dysfunction. In order to know exactly what he is dealing with, a man should obtain a medical diagnosis when he is experiencing any of these problems. However, as a general rule, prostatitis is more common in younger men, while BPH is more common in older men.

Depending on the cause, here are some of the remedies that help prostate problems. The mineral zinc is very important for prostate health and is lost with every ejaculation. Pumpkin seeds are high in zinc and have been used historically to aid prostate health. Studies have shown that saw palmetto can be an effective remedy for BPH. It inhibits the conversion of testosterone to dihydrotestosterone of DHT, a more powerful form of testosterone that promotes prostate swelling. It also has an anti-inflammatory property.

Another herb helpful for prostate problems is pygeum, an African herb. It is slightly less effective than saw palmetto, but does improve urinary function and reduce inflammation. Nettle root, white sage, agrimony, and soy are other herbs that may be helpful for prostate problems.

There are several good prostate formulas available which contain these, and other prostate assisting herbs. Men's Formula blends pygeum, saw palmetto, nettle root, and zinc into an effective formula for most cases of BPH. The formula may also be helpful for prostatitis and urinary tract infections in men.

PS II is a blend created by herbalist Stan Malstrom for prostate problems. It contains black cohosh, licorice, kelp, gotu kola, golden seal, capsicum fruit, ginger and dong quai. This blend

reduces inflammation, helps fight infection, stimulates circulation in the pelvic area and may help prevent over stimulation of the prostate. It can be effective both for BPH or prostatitis.

John Christopher also created a prostate formula sold under the trade name P-X. It contains cedar berries, golden seal, capsicum, parsley, ginger, eleuthero root, uva ursi, queen of the meadow, marshmallow. This formula works primarily on the urinary tract, reducing inflammation and combating infection. It is more particularly aimed at prostatitis, than BPH.

Herbal Pumpkin is an antiparasitic formula that has also been helpful in some cases of prostate enlargement or inflammation. It contains pumpkin seeds, which are rich in zinc and helpful for the prostate. It may also help clear up prostate infections.

There has been an increase in the cases of prostate cancer and infertility in men in recent years. Many researchers believe this is due to the influence of xenoestrogens (estrogen-like substances found in the environment). These xenoestrogens attach to hormone receptor sites and disrupt the balance of hormonal communication in the body. Sources of xenoestrogens include pesticides, materials leached from plastic containers, and certain industrial chemicals. It is wise for men who wish to maintain prostate health to avoid chemical pollutants, eat organic food to reduce exposure to pesticides, and eat foods that protect the prostate from xenoestrogenic damage.

Lycopene, a substance found in tomatoes and other red fruits and vegetables, has been shown to be a powerful antioxidant that helps protect the prostate. It is found in Men's Formula, Super Antioxidants and Carotenoid Blend. Legumes such as beans and soy appear to have a protective effect against xenoestrogens, as do whole grains and green leafy vegetables. Zinc supplements may also be helpful in protecting the prostate.

If prostate cancer does develop, the herbs and formulas mentioned above are not effective therapies for cancer. Alternative approaches to treating prostate cancer are available, but are beyond the scope of this handout.

For help in selecting the supplements that are right for you, consult a qualified herb specialist. You can also check some of the references below.

Selected References

Herbal Therapy and Supplements by Merrily A. Kuhn and David Winston
The One Spirit Encyclopedia of Complementary Health, Nikki Bradford, Editor
Professional Guide to Conditions, Herbs and Supplements by IntegrativMedicine
Hormone Replacement Therapy: Yes or No? by Betty Kamen, Ph.D.

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