

Adaptogenic Herbs

We are flexible. We are adaptable. We are resilient.

Adaptogens are a clan of plants that support our body's capacity to interact, be impacted, recover + be restored while + after experiencing stress. Their main goal is to restore our constitutional balance by working intimately with the hypothalamus, pituitary glands, adrenals, thyroid, and organs where hormones are produced or secreted.

How adaptogenic herbs works

Our adaptogenic herbs work to relieve stress by modulating the release of stress hormones from the adrenal glands. When the brain perceives danger/stress it signals the hypothalamus to release a corticotropin-releasing hormone (CRH), an excess of CRH leads to increased anxiety, suppression of appetite, insomnia, and depression. CRH travels to the pituitary, where it stimulates adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH). ACTH travels through the bloodstream to the adrenal cortex where it stimulates the release of cortisol and other glucocorticoid hormones, which in excess increases leads to mood swings, & high blood pressure, and inhibits a stress response. Our hypothalamus-pituitary gland (aka the HPA axis) remembers stress, when we are triggered again or levels of stress rise, the feelings are amplified and the nerve pathways created from the last response deepen. Our adaptogenic herbs inhibit the production of CRH and ACTH from the hypothalamus and pituitary, reducing the overall output of stress hormones. This means that the stress hormones don't ramp up with each stressful event, allowing you to meet life's challenges with less tension and anxiety, more energy and greater mental clarity

Benefits of Adaptogenic Herbs

Adaptogens are the most effective + poignant when we commit to working with them over an extended period of time in their natural form [dried or fresh plant material]. They act on the body as comrade. They enter with humility to offer their wisdom on what it means to be whole. We work with them in their full natural form, rather than isolating their specific constituents such as is the practice in pharmaceuticals, which act like we can isolate our soul from our bodies. Adaptogens work with us, wherever we are, to replenish energy that has been taken over, spent or burnt by our modern lives.

Adaptogens stand in solidarity with BIPOC communities. They help us hold with humility while equipping us with the adequate tools for the emotional and physical body to work with intergenerational trauma, racism, microaggressions that are not that micro + day to day trauma that gets lodged between our bones, flow through our blood + rupture our nerves. Adaptogens create new nourishing channels so that we may adapt from our survival responses [flight, fight, freeze] to thriving responses [love, compassion, patience].

Health Benefits

- Boost for the immune system
- Increased physical endurance and mental focus
- Reduction in discomfort caused by poor health
- Protecting cardiovascular health
- Balancing hormones
- Bringing us to place of equilibrium

Herbal Medicine Preparations: Infusion, Decoction, Tincture, Glycerites



created + blessed by xóchicoatl of [la mala yerba](#)

2021

Adaptogenic Herbs

With profile contributions from Naomi Doe Moody

American Ginseng

Panax quinquefolius

Yoruba: Ginseng root



Planet: Sun

Element: Fire

Actions: Adaptogen, General tonic, Antitumor, Antiviral, Antioxidant, Hepatoprotective, Antispasmodic, Anti-inflammatory, Anti-ulcer, Analgesic,, Anti-Fatigue

Spiritual Medicine:

- Aphrodisiac commonly used in love spells (American Folk Magic)
- Luck and prosperity amulets and talismans
- Spirit communication and divination
- Protection
- Wishes and prayers

Physical Medicine:

- Enhances endurance
- Blood sugar balancing activity
- Reduces LDL while raising HDL cholesterol
- Enhances metabolic activity in the brain
- Minimizes cell damage from radiation+enhances the recovery process after radiation exposure
- Reproductive tonic
- Libido enhancement

Ashwagandha

Withania somnifera



Planet: Mars

Element: Fire

Actions: General tonic, rejuvenating, nervous system tonic, sedative, adaptogen, immuno-modulator, anti-tumor, anti-inflammatory, astringent, anti-anemic, aphrodisiac, oxytocic

Spiritual Medicine:

- Ayurvedic elixir of life+longevity
- Strengthens prana, the vital energy of the body.
- sharpens mental powers and enhances the memory and will be a valuable aid to those who are studying
- Aphrodisiac used in some forms of tantra and sex magic.

Physical Medicine:

- Combats stress
- Regulates sleep
- Aids strength, stamina and endurance levels
- Full of antioxidants: protects, nourishes and promotes healthy cells, particularly brain and nervous system
- Encourages relief from hormone imbalance and can assist during menstrual cycle
- Antioxidant properties fight off the free radicals present in the air

Asian Ginseng

Panax ginseng

Planet: Sun

Element: Fire



created + blessed by xóchicoatl of [la mala yerba](#)

2021

Adaptogenic Herbs

Yen-Shen, manroot, five fingers,
red berry
Yoruba: Ginseng root



Actions: Adaptogen, general stimulant & tonic, nervous system relaxant/stimulant, sedative, antidepressant, anxiolytic, hypoglycemic, analgesic, antioxidant, immuno-modulator, hepatoprotective, cardiogenic, vasodilator, anti-cholesterol, demulcent, male tonic, aphrodisiac, diuretic, antispasmodic

Spiritual Medicine:

- Calms the spirit manifestation of heart Qi
- Used in healing rituals and amulets for good health, vitality, stamina, endurance and longevity
- Brings good luck, fertility and abundance.

Physical Medicine:

Increases vitality and the body's ability to withstand stress

Traditional TCM indications include:

- Shallow or labored breathing
- Lethargy
- Chest and abdominal distention
- Palpitations with anxiety
- Insomnia
- Restlessness

Western medical/herbal indications:

- Congestive heart failure
- Cancer prevention
- Depressed bone marrow associated with radiation
- Erectile dysfunction and Male fertility problems
- Type 2 diabetes
- , Anemia

Astragalus

Astragalus membranaceus
Yoruba: Osonkotu/Isankotu



Actions: Immunomodulatory, adaptogen, antioxidant, antimicrobial, hypoglycemic, circulatory stimulant, vasodilator, hypotensive, cardiogenic, diuretic, hepatoprotective

Spiritual Medicine:

TCM:

- Considered to be one of the most powerful Qi/life force energy tonics
- Works to restore, cultivate and supply Qi energy in the body, mind and spirit

Physical Medicine:

- Anti-Inflammatory,
- Boosts the Immune System,
- Slows or Prevents Growth of Tumors
- Protects the Cardiovascular System
- Regulates and Prevents Diabetes Contains Antioxidative and Anti-Aging Capabilities
- Aids in Wound Healing and Minimizes Scarring
- Alleviates Symptoms of Chemotherapy
- Treats Colds & Flu



Adaptogenic Herbs

- Therapy for Chronic Asthma

Cordyceps

Cordyceps sinensis



Actions: Tonic, adaptogenic, immuno-modulator, anti-inflammatory, anti-asthmatic, expectorant, anti-oxidant, anti-viral, anti-microbial, anti-tumor, antispasmodic, hepatoprotective,

Spiritual Medicine:

- Have been used in Chinese, Christian and Hindu religious ceremonies for centuries
- Linked to longevity and immortality
- In Ayurvedic medicine, they are said to be beneficial in enhancing vigor and vitality

Physical Medicine:

Relieves stress and supports:

- Respiratory infections like chronic bronchitis, coughs, colds and the flu
- Reproductive problems and sexual dysfunction
- Kidney disorders, bladder infections and urination problems
- Asthma
- Hepatitis B
- Low circulation and irregular heartbeats heart disease and high cholesterol
- Liver disorders
- Muscle weakness
- Chronic fatigue syndrome and low energy
- Dizziness

Eleuthero

Eleutherococcus senticosus



Actions: Adaptogen & general tonic, antioxidant, chemoprotective, immuno-modulator & stimulant, hypertensive (in a hypotensive state), cardiotonic, hypoglycemic, circulatory stimulant, anti-coagulant, bitter.

Spiritual Medicine:

- Highly regarded as a stimulant and general tonic that promotes sexual potency, lust, vitality, and long life.
- In modern magick, Ginseng root is carried to attract love, ensure sexual potency, enhance beauty, draw money, and promote general good health and vitality
- Associated with protection, fulfillment of wishes, and spirituality

Physical Medicine:

- Adrenal adaptogen
- Increases mental alertness and physical endurance
- Inhibits hypertrophy of adrenal and thyroid glands by reducing extent of the fight or flight reaction and reduces the exhaustive effects of long term stress
- Relieves+prevents chronic viral infection



created + blessed by xóchicoatl of [la mala yerba](#)

2021

Adaptogenic Herbs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cancer prevention+therapy - Supports chronic illness and fatigue - Reduces damage from heavy metal and pesticide toxicity.
--	--

Holy Basil/Tulsi

Ocimum sanctum



Planet: Mercury

Element: Air

Actions: Anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, anodyne, immune modulating, adaptogenic, sedative, circulatory stimulant, digestive, carminative, antioxidant, hypoglycemic, hypotensive, antimicrobial, expectorant, bronchodilator, diuretic, galactagogue, antidepressant, antiviral

Spiritual Medicine:

Holy Basil is mostly use in Hinduism, with the devout looking after their plants each day as a form of ritual

- Leaves are laid on the dead as a protection for their journey to the Afterlife
- Roots or tough stems are worn as arm bracelets or necklaces by the Vishnu-Brahmans and to carve mala beads
- Used for: Love, Exorcism, Wealth, Flying and Protection
- Represents harmony, happiness, purity, serenity, luck, and good health
- Calms and brings goodness and joy to your being
- Nourishes us to perfect health and enlightenment
- Helps maintain the balance of our chakras, the energy centers of the body
- In the Puranas, a sacred Hindu text, everything associated with the plant is holy
- Used in meditation to give clarity and protection
- Purifier of body, mind, and spirit

Physical Medicine:

- Fights acne
- Protects against diabetes
- Helps fight cancer
- Balances hormones and lowers stress
- Relieves fever
- Helps improve respiratory disorders
- Good source of vitamin K
- Dental care and oral health
- Relieves headaches
- Supports eye health



created + blessed by xóchicoatl of [la mala yerba](#)

2021

Adaptogenic Herbs

Maca

Yoruba: isu baka



Actions: Adaptogen, antioxidant, aphrodisiac, immune tonic, nutritive, rejuvenative, tonic

Spiritual Medicine:

Maca has been cultivated as a life-sustaining substance in the Andes for 2000 years. It is legendary for:

- Delivering energy
- Mental clarity
- Enhancing libido.

Physical Medicine:

Increases production of estrogen, testosterone, & progesterone

Supportive to:

- Adrenal Exhaustion
- Alcohol addiction
- Anemia
- Chronic Fatigue
- Erectile Dysfunction+low sperm count
- Infertility
- Irregular menses + menopause symptoms
- Memory Loss
- Osteoporosis
- Premature Aging
- Rheumatism
- Tuberculosis

Nettles

Urtica dioica

Swahili: kupiga makofi

Igbo: na-akụ ụgbụ

Yoruba: ti n ta awon eja



Planet: Mars

Element: Fire

Actions: Anti-inflammatory, anti-septic, mild hypoglycemic, diuretic, anti-hemorrhagic, hemostatic, detoxifier, vasodilator, circulatory stimulant, hypotensive, nutritive, galactagogue, astringent, expectorant, anti-allergic, reduces BPH, anti-rheumatic

Considered by some to be adaptogenic but there is controversy surrounding the classification of this herb as such

Spiritual Medicine:

- Teaches us how to transmute painful life experiences into personal change and growth, just as the stinging nettle herself yields a wonderful tonic
- Renders strength to the emotions, underpinning them and allowing a person to use them to grow and manifest change
- Burned as smudge to drive out negativity or unwanted spirits
- Protection
- Used in spells to break curses.

Physical Medicine:

- Tonifies the lungs
- Treats skin
- Builds+purifies blood
- Drains phlegm
- Supportive to urinary tract infections
- Relieves allergy congestion, gout
- Enriches kidney and liver
- Helps regulate menses
- Stops bleeding: hemorrhage, postpartum bleeding, heavy menses
- Regulates Metabolism:



created + blessed by xóchicoatl of [la mala yerba](#)

2021

Adaptogenic Herbs

	<p>improves stamina, poor appetite</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improves lactation
--	---

Reishi

Ganoderma lucidum



Actions: General tonic, nervous system sedative, analgesic, adaptogen, hypoglycemic, antioxidant, immuno-stimulant, anti-tumor, anti-bacterial, anti-viral, anti-inflammatory, anti-allergenic, antihistamine, antitussive, expectorant, detoxifier, cardiogenic, hypotensive, hypolipidemic, hepatoprotector

Spiritual Medicine:

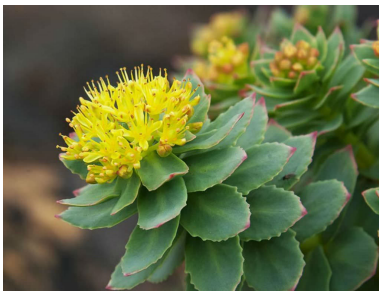
- Used in TCM for thousands of years to nourish the "Shen" or spiritual awareness/higher self

Physical Medicine:

- Helps defend against tumor and cancer growth
- Improves liver function and detoxification
- Promotes heart health and balances blood pressure
- Helps balance hormones and fights diabetes
- Fights allergies and asthma
- Reduces risk for infection and viruses

Rhodiola

Rhodiola rosea,
Rhodiola sacra (Tibetan)



Actions: Adaptogen, tonic, stimulant, mental enhancer, anti-stress, antioxidant, immuno-stimulant, cardioprotective

Spiritual Medicine:

- Calming and stabilising to the mind
- Assists with deep meditation and spiritual practice.
- Heart tonic that is said to allow a more "heart centred perception" to arise, broadening our perspective on life and enabling us to realise the interconnected nature of reality

Physical Medicine

The effects on the nervous system for this herb can be both stimulating and sedating depending on the dose.

- Enhances physical endurance and sexual potency
- Improves thyroid, thymus and adrenal function
- Protects the nervous system, heart and liver through antioxidant effects
- Increases the body's resistance to stress and has a protective effect upon neurotransmitters (especially serotonin and dopamine)
- Headache relief due to physical and mental exhaustion
- Enhances cognitive function, learning, memory and



Adaptogenic Herbs

	concentration.
--	----------------

Rose

Rosa spp

Yoruba: dide

Swahili: akaondoka

Ibgo: bilie

Planet: Venus

Element: Water

Actions: Flowers + Leaves- Anti-inflammatory, Vulnerary, Relaxant Nervine, Astringent, mild Anti-Infective (esp topically), Hemostatic/Styptic, Cardiovascular Tonic, Blood Tonic (esp Hips), Liver Relaxant, Aphrodisiac, Blood-Mover, Shen Tonic
Hips- Blood Tonic, Astringent, Vulnerary

Considered by a few to be relatively adaptogenic



Spiritual Medicine:

- Brings balance to the spiritual and emotional heart
- Shows us the way home through revealing our wholeness, not through harmonizing the binary but by allowing for a spectrum
- Brings love into power and power into love
- Keeper of boundaries
- Teacher of strength in and through adversity
- Tonic for spiritual-emotional heart
- Useful for trauma, sadness and grief, depression, anxiety, heartbreak
- Heart-opening, and well known flower of love and devotion

Physical Medicine:

- Great first aid medicine
- Reduces pain, heat and inflammation from wounds and skin abrasions, rashes, bites and stings, sunburns and mild burns
- Skin infections (cellulitis)
- Soothes nervous system
- Heart/Cardiovascular tonic
- Osteoarthritis ("wear and tear arthritis"), sore muscles, chronic musculoskeletal pain
- Helps promote beneficial bacteria in our guts
- Aphrodisiac, helpful for low libido, erectile dysfunction, frigidity
- Relieves menstrual cramps, mood swings and scanty menses resulting from pelvic congestion.

Schisandra

Schisandra chinensis

Wu Wei Zi

Actions: General tonic/stimulant/restorative, nervous system tonic, mild anti-depressant, anti-stress, adaptogen, adrenal tonic, regulator of blood glucose & mucosal secretions, antioxidant, astringent, anti-tussive, lung tonic, regulates blood pressure, anti-cholesterol, hepatoprotective, oxytocic



created + blessed by xóchicoatl of [la mala yerba](#)

2021

Adaptogenic Herbs



Spiritual Medicine:

- Frequently pictured in ancient Chinese art as the symbol of longevity and beauty, suggesting the ability to attain immortality
- In one painting, Magu, the goddess of beauty and eternal youth, is shown serving a tray of Schizandra, Reishi (the herb of immortality) and a "peach of longevity" to her immortal friends
- Magu is said to forever appear the age of eighteen
- Quiets spirit
- Calms heart

Physical Medicine

- General liver tonic and antioxidant
- Promotes vitality and increases memory and cognitive functions while providing resistance to stress
- Tones and strengthens the immune system to increase physical performance and endurance and promotes recovery after surgery
- Enhances athletic performance
- Improves liver detoxification and functions.

Shatavari

Asparagus racemosus
Tian men dong
wild asparagus root



Actions: Diuretic, adaptogen, antispasmodic, galactagogue, demulcent, sexual tonic, antidiarrhoeal

Spiritual Medicine:

- Sacral chakra balancing
- Sanskrit name means she who has a thousand husbands
- Lucid dreaming
- Heart opening
- Promotes compassion and love
- Chinese name means flying spirit herb
- Used by Taoists for radiant health and spiritual awareness

Physical Medicine:

- Pain relief
- Digestion+elimination; diarrhea
- Alcohol addiction and withdrawal,
- Cancer support
- Lung tonic, bronchitis, tuberculosis
- Diabetes support
- Uterine bleeding+UTIs
- Dementia support
- Nutritive tonic
- PMS relief
- Reproductive tonic
- Useful when working with STIs

Other Adaptogens include:

Chaga

Jiaogulan

Lion's mane [esp low immunity]

Milk thistle [Igbo-Mmiri ara ehi thistle; Swahili-Mchuzi wa maziwa, Yoruba-Wara koriko]

Rhapnicum

Turkey tail [esp low immunity; turkey-Toki in Igbo]



created + blessed by xóchicoatl of [la mala yerba](#)

2021

Adaptogenic Herbs



created + blessed by xóchicoatl of [la mala yerba](#)
2021