

**Featured Topic: Adaptogens –  
Ashwaghandha and Rhodiola  
(4 slides)**

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# New interest in ancient medicines

- Used medicinally for thousands of years, modern research continues to find new uses for ashwagandha
  - For people with mild cognitive impairment, 8 weeks of ashwagandha supplementation **significantly improved memory and attention**
  - In patients treated for **breast cancer**, ashwagandha was associated with a 34% reduction in cancer fatigue and about a 30% increased survival rate at 24 months post-treatment
  - **Reduced cortisol levels** (the stress hormone) by almost 30%
  - **Increased sperm concentration** 167%, sperm motility 57%, and serum testosterone levels 17% in men with infertility and low sperm counts
  - 77% reduction in **depression** score, 75% reduction in **anxiety** score, and 64% reduction in **stress** score in a clinical study of people with a history of chronic stress

# Ashwaghandha and other Adaptogens

- “Adaptogens” are herbal medicines
  - Have **no side effects** (non-toxic)
  - **Restore the body** – bring up what is too low, bring down what is too high
  - Help the body **adapt and resist** the negative effects of stress and illness
- Adaptogens
  - Fight fatigue
  - Increase energy
  - Help fight off illnesses
  - Can be both calming and energizing *without* excessive stimulation

# Rhodiola – also an important adaptogen

- Boosts energy during physical exertion
- Increases mental performance and concentration
- Relieves the symptoms of anxiety
- Alleviates mild to moderate depression
- Improves physical fitness and reduces mental fatigue
- Shown to help regulate menstrual cycles and may help increase fertility
- Well known for its ability to increase libido

# How to use Ashwagandha and Rhodiola

- Can be taken daily for energy, immune support, mental clarity, etc.
- Or, use when needed during times of increased stress or illness
- Take on an empty stomach if possible
- 500 – 1500 mg of the combination daily

# **Pet Health: Cancer (4 slides)**

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# Cancer Statistics in Dogs and Cats

- According to the best data we have
  - 1 in 4 dogs will get cancer
  - Half of all dogs over age 10 will die with or from cancer
  - Over 60% of all golden retrievers die from cancer
- Cancer in cats is less common than in dogs, but it tends to be more aggressive
  - Cancer in cats is frequently associated with feline leukemia virus (FLV) infection

# Diet and Exercise: important for pets, too

- Diet – feed your pets the best quality food you can
- No lawn chemicals – studies have linked **professionally applied lawn pesticides** to increased risk of bladder cancer and lymphoma in dogs
- Exercise
  - According to 2014 data, 53% of dogs and 58% of cats are overweight or obese
  - Extra pounds in pets lead to inflammation and cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and makes arthritis problems worse
  - Get up and get yourself AND your pet moving!

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# Supplements for Pets

- Curcumin: safe and effective for dogs and cats
- Stops cancer cell formation, multiplication and spread
- In cell studies, exposure to curcumin **reduced canine bone cancer cell proliferation** by up to **70%**
- In overweight cats, supplementation with an enhanced absorption curcumin for 8 weeks **significantly reduced certain markers of inflammation** - inflammation is a root cause of cancer
- Just like for people, curcumin is not well absorbed in animals. In dogs, combining curcumin with turmeric essential oil increased absorption by 7 times (700%) over plain curcumin
- Dosage – 200 to 375 mg daily for a cat or small dog, up to 750 mg for large dogs
- BONUS: because of curcumin's anti-inflammatory effects, it is also a great option for relieving pain, such as arthritic pain, in pets

**Two Potential Causes of  
Alzheimer's: Allergy Drugs and  
Prostate Cancer Treatment  
(3 slides)**

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# Anticholinergics and Alzheimer's

- Researchers evaluated medical records from over 300,000 patients, looking for connections between use of anticholinergic drugs and dementia
  - Anticholinergic drugs block the action of a neurotransmitter called acetylcholine
  - Acetylcholine sends signals to cells that control muscle contraction, learning, and memory
  - Used to treat everything from allergies to incontinence
  - Over 600 drugs have anticholinergic activity
- Results: people who took anticholinergic drugs daily **were 50% more likely to develop dementia**

# Prostate cancer treatment and Alzheimer's

- Research study of over 150,000 men over age 66 that had been diagnosed with prostate cancer
- Researchers monitored the men for 10 years after their diagnosis
- Results: men who were given a hormone treatment (ADT: androgen deprivation therapy, which suppresses testosterone) had a 20% increased risk of dementia and a 14% increased risk of Alzheimer's versus men who were not treated with ADT
- The greater the number of ADT doses, the greater the risk of Alzheimer's
- Hormone therapy can affect mental function by decreasing the formation of new brain cells, and increases other Alzheimer's risk factors (diabetes, heart disease, and depression)

# Consider some alternatives

- In many (most!) cases, there are natural alternatives to anticholinergics
- For incontinence and bladder problems: Angelica archangelica
- For sleep problems (many people, especially older adults, use Benadryl as a sleep medication): essential oils of lavender, mandarin, lemon balm, and ravintsara
- For anxiety: Echinacea angustifolia
- For respiratory problems: Boswellia serrata
- For the prostate: vitamin D, curcumin, pomegranate, French grape seed, silybin from milk thistle

# **A Closer Look at: Sodium (2 slides)**

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# All salt is sodium, but not all sodium is salt

- According to the CDC, most Americans have consumed too much sodium before they ever pick up a salt shaker
- Why? The American food supply has **35% more sodium per person** than it did in the early 1990s
  - Typical daily intake of sodium is 3400 mg, about 47% more than the recommended amount
- Too much sodium causes
  - Fluid retention
  - Which increases blood volume
  - Which increases blood pressure
  - Which puts strain on the kidneys, heart and blood

# Where is the sodium if it isn't in the salt shaker?

- **75%** of the average American's sodium intake comes from **processed foods**
  - **Worst offenders:** canned soups, packaged bagels, pasta sauce, salad dressing and frozen dinners
- In processed foods, sodium can be found as
  - Sodium chloride, sodium bicarbonate, monosodium glutamate, sodium benzoate, sodium saccharin and sodium nitrate
- **The simple way to cut sodium intake?** Put down the package and eat fresh food instead.