Supplements, and herbs to help endometriosis

From endo-resolved.com
When you want to use a more natural approach to managing endometriosis, you can give your body added support with the help of certain supplements, herbs and specific nutrients.

❖ The power of nature and natural remedies are available to help us heal.
You can include most of these natural supplements and remedies along with conventional treatments. Also, many of these supplements will help to boost your immune system which in turn will help your body to heal from endometriosis.

Herbs can help to balance your hormone levels, while vitamins can support your immune system and support your nutritional needs. Additionally, there are certain supplements that can help address symptoms of pain and inflammation.
Many of these supplements are used regularly by women who are dealing with endometriosis and are feeling the benefits with reduced symptoms of pain and inflammation.

Supplements and herbs to help endometriosis

Vitamin A

Vitamin A aids in the functioning in normal cell growth and development. Deficiency causes roughening and hardening of the skin, night blindness and deterioration of mucous membranes in the lungs. It exists in two forms: Vitamin Retinol and Beta carotene.

A study published a PubMed suggested that natural antioxidants such as vitamin E and C at low doses, are highly efficient alternative therapy to relieve chronic pelvic pain in women with endometriosis.
**Aloe vera**

Sometimes those suffering endometrioses feel too nauseous to eat properly and this can lead to nutrient deficiencies.

For this reason, Aloe vera juice is a great addition to use on a daily basis. Aloe vera contains a vast range of vitamins, minerals and amino acids to support nutritional needs. It also has great healing and soothing properties for the gut. Aloe doesn’t taste great but you can add some fruit juice to help it go down!

**Amino acids**

Amino acids effect many functions and processes in the body and they are the building blocks of protein. They are essential for healing wounds and repairing tissue, especially in the muscles, bones, skin and hair as well as for the removal of all kinds of waste deposits produced in connection with the metabolism.

Amino acids are found mainly in protein-based foods like eggs and meat but also found in nuts and seeds.
Protein is broken down in the intestinal tract and turned into individual aminos. The body needs to be supplied with amino acids throughout the day and is supported by your dietary intake or by taking supplements.

Certain amino acids have a calming effect on the body which can help with insomnia. These include glycine, taurine, theanine, gaba and tryptophan. These are all available as individual supplements and can also be found in various sleep remedies in combination.

Supplementing with a good quality amino acid complex can support the wound healing properties that aminos provide, and may help the body support healing from the damage caused by endometriosis.

**B vitamins**

These are important for the breakdown of proteins, carbohydrates and fats in the body. **B vitamins are reported to improve the emotional symptoms of endometriosis**, and have proved helpful in dealing with PMT. B vitamins also support your adrenal glands. Bee pollen is a great source of B vitamins.
B6

An excess of estrogen can be re-balanced by taking B6 which can help to boost your natural progesterone production. B6 supports the development of the corpus luteum (The corpus luteum is a temporary endocrine structure in female ovaries and is involved in the production of relatively high levels of progesterone).

Additionally, some progesterone is made in the adrenal glands so you need to support the healthy function of your adrenals with b complex vitamins and vitamin C.

B6 also specifically works with liver enzymes to remove excess estrogen from the body and boosts the immune system to prevent auto-immune response.

Vitamin C

Vitamin C is well known for helping to boost the immune system and help provide resistance to disease. It is also used in the body to build and maintain collagen within the body.
Vitamin C tops the list of immune boosters for many reasons. There has been more research about the immune-boosting effects of Vitamin C than perhaps any other nutrient.

Vitamin C is available in supplement form and it's available naturally in many fruits and vegetables. I like to use Camu camu powder as it is very high in vitamin C as well as other nutrients – simply mix it in your morning smoothie.

Another great benefit of vitamin C is that helps to boost your natural Progesterone production, along with vitamin B6.

**Co-enzyme Q10**

Taken as a dietary supplement CoQ10 plays an important part in the production of chemical energy in the mitochondria. It also serves as a powerful antioxidant.

CoQ10 is gaining evidence that it has a role in the treatment of mitochondrial disorders and counteracting
some of the damage caused by free radicals and it is said to significantly enhance the immune function of the body. Aids the heart muscle in its uptake of oxygen.

**Cramp bark**

As the plant name suggests, it can be used exactly for just that purpose! The bark contains methyl salicylate which is a weak acting precursor to the salicylic acid that is used in aspirin, but much less irritating to the gastric mucosa.

Cramp bark is traditionally used for pain, inflammation, back pain and menstrual cramps. Cramp bark is also said to reduce fluid retention. (1)

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‘When diet is wrong, medicine is of no use. When diet is correct, medicine is of no need.’ Ayurvedic Proverb
D – vitamin

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin belonging to the steroid hormone family.

A study comparing 1385 cases of Endometriosis (proven by laparoscopy) to over 69,000 disease-free women (The Nurse Health Study) showed that women with the highest levels of vitamin D have 24% lower risk of endometriosis than those in the lower levels.

These results, without proving the relevance between vitamin D levels and endometriosis, showed a strong association between low levels of Vitamin D and the occurrence of endometriosis. (2)

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‘The food you eat can be either the safest and most powerful form of medicine or the slowest form of poison.’
Ann Wigmore
Vitamin D & Hormones

There is a connection between vitamin D and important hormones, such as dopamine and serotonin, which can regulate your mood. This evidence is in part derived from an animal-based trial wherein it was found that vitamin D supplementation was capable of boosting dopamine levels in vitamin D deficient rats.

There is also some evidence to suggest that vitamin D could be capable of influencing several different hormones in the body, from your thyroid hormones to sex hormones like estrogen and progesterone.
Digestive enzymes

Enzymes are biological catalysts: this means that they speed up the chemical reactions in living things. Without enzymes, our guts would take weeks to digest our food, our muscles, nerves and bones would not work properly and so on.

Without enzymes our health would be impossible as every metabolic function of the body requires them. Inadequate production of digestive enzymes due to illness negatively affects the breakdown of foods into the nutrients and the body’s needs.

Additionally, several digestive enzymes can be quite useful in relieving the pain associated with endometriosis. They can also help to reduce scarring and inflammation of the implants that occur with this disease.

These enzymes include: bromelain, a digestive enzyme extracted from the stem of the pineapple (500 to 1000 mg. four times a day taken apart from meals); papain, an enzyme derived from papaya (200 to 300 mg. four times a day apart from meals).
Another use of digestive enzymes is to also take a digestive enzyme supplement blend with meals to help break down foods and ensure absorption of nutrients.

There are many reports from endometriosis sufferers saying they have found these digestive enzymes to be helpful with reducing their symptoms.

**DIM**

DIM (diindolylmethane) supports the body in eliminating excess estrogen. DIM is derived from cruciferous vegetables like cauliflower and broccoli. It metabolizes estrogen into components easily assimilated and removed by the body, and avoids the development of estrogen dominance. DIM is also able to reduce the effects of xeno-estrogens from the environment. It is available in supplement form in varying strengths.

**DLPA**

DL-Phenylalanine (DLPA) does not actually block the
symptoms. It works instead by protecting the body’s naturally produced pain killing endorphins (the body’s morphine), effectively extending their life span in the nervous system.

DLPA can also relieve symptoms of PMS and has had success in dealing with the pain of endometriosis as well as generalized pain in those who use this compound.

**Vitamin E**

Vitamin E stimulates the production of natural killer cells, those that seek out and destroy germs and cancer cells. Vitamin E enhances the production of B-cells, the immune cells that produce antibodies that destroy bacteria. Vitamin E supplementation may also reverse some of the decline in immune response commonly seen in ageing.

**Evening primrose oil (EPO)**

An essential fatty acid in Evening Primrose Oil called
gamma-linolenic acid (GLA) is anti-inflammatory and acts to inhibit tumor growth in those with endometriosis. (3)

Gamma linoleic acid (GLA) is the precursor to anti-inflammatory prostaglandins. A useful addition to the diet with conditions such as endometriosis, arthritis, asthma, PMS, eczema and heart disease.

**Iron**

Women with Endometriosis tend to have very heavy periods which can lead to an iron deficiency. This can lead to anemia which is characterized by extreme fatigue and weakness. Iron supplements are readily available but many women have difficulty with constipation from iron supplements.

As an alternative you can add Blackstrap Molasses to your diet to increase your iron or try Beef Liver capsules.

Iron is a mineral that is used by the body to make hemoglobin, the part of the red blood cell that transports oxygen. Iron-containing foods include red meat, poultry, legumes, green leafy vegetables and
whole grain breads and cereals. A lack of iron in the diet or poor absorption of iron can lead to anemia.

**L-carnitine**

Useful in helping our bodies to convert fat to energy, carnitine is believed capable of helping to facilitate pregnancy in women with endometriosis. Those who remove meat and dairy from their diet could benefit from carnitine as protein is the main source of this nutrient.

L-carnitine is an amino acid that benefits energy levels by transporting fatty acids into the mitochondria where they can be burned up and used as fuel. It boosts energy, improves brain and cognitive function and can regulate blood sugar.

**Magnesium**

Magnesium has many benefits for endometriosis, depending on which type of magnesium is used. It can help with muscle pain, insomnia, bowel problems,
provide a calming effect, support brain function and is involved in many biochemical processes in the body.

Magnesium supports detoxification - it is crucial for the removal of toxic substances and heavy metals such as mercury, aluminum, and lead from the body.

Food sources of magnesium are dark green, leafy vegetables. Also found in almonds, cashews and nut butters, pulses, lentils and brown rice.

**Milk thistle**

This herb contains the antioxidant silymarin, repairs the cells in your liver and protects cells from damage (thereby regenerating the strength of the liver to detox the body of excess estrogen), and it is anti-inflammatory. So, this is a powerful herb for endometriosis.

_Be careful with milk thistle as it can reduce iron absorption so always take away from meals._
NAC (N-acetyl-cysteine)

N-acetyl-cysteine is a powerful supplement that increases glutathione, one of the most important detoxifiers naturally produced in our bodies.

NAC is also a powerful antioxidant with some interesting data behind it specific to endometriosis. In a 2013 study of ninety-two women in Italy, forty-seven took NAC and forty-two took a placebo.

Of those who took 600 mg of NAC three times a day, twenty-four patients cancelled their scheduled laparoscopy due to a decrease or disappearance of endometriosis, improved pain reduction, or because they had become pregnant! (4)
Healthy oils can help endometriosis

Reduce inflammation
Reduce pain
Regulate hormones

Best sources:
Nuts: Almonds, Brazil
Seeds: Chia, Hemp, Sunflower
Coconut oil & milk
Free range eggs
Oily fish - salmon, mackerel, tuna, sardines
cod liver oil, olive oil
**Omega 3 oils**

*These are key oils to help with endometriosis.*

Omega 3 help to produce the anti-inflammatory prostaglandins, which will help to reduce the symptoms of pain and inflammation with endometriosis.

Some of the best sources of omega-3 oils are found in marine and plant oils and include: oily fish, fish oil, walnut oil, pumpkin seeds and chia seeds. Can also be used as a dietary supplement.

**Peruvian Maca Root**

Maca Root contains significant amounts of amino acids, complex carbohydrates, vitamins B1, B2, B12, C and E and minerals, including calcium, phosphorus, zinc, magnesium and iron.

This herb has been traditionally used to increase energy, vitality, stamina and endurance in athletes, promote mental clarity, address menstrual irregularities and
female hormone imbalances, including menopause.
Some women have obtained good benefits from Maca, while for others it has upset their hormonal balance. Therefore, it is advisable to experiment and start with a low dose.

**Potassium**

Potassium is essential for muscle contraction, regulation of heart rate, conduction of nerve impulses and fluid balance in the body. Many women may become deficient in potassium due to bouts of diarrhea during the menstrual cycle, and having muscle weakness, heart palpitations and fatigue are symptoms of low potassium. Some good sources of potassium are bananas, apricots, oranges, potatoes and dark green leafy vegetables.

**Probiotics**

Probiotics are bacteria that help replenish the beneficial bacteria in the intestine. Common foods that contain
Probiotics are yogurt and fermented milk drinks. Maintaining a balance of healthy bacteria in the intestine is beneficial for a healthy digestive system.

The good bacteria in your gut can be destroyed by drugs including birth control, anti-biotics, pain meds and hormone meds to treat endometriosis.

It is a good idea to supplement with a full spectrum probiotic supplement which will support your gut health and also help your immune system.

**Pycnogenol**

Pycnogenol is an extract from the French maritime pine bark whose main ingredient is procyanidin. Procyanidin is a powerful antioxidant also found in food such as grapes, berries, pomegranates, red wine and various nuts.

Pycnogenol is used for treating circulation problems, allergies, asthma, ringing in the ears, high blood pressure, muscle soreness, pain, osteoarthritis, diabetes, endometriosis, menopausal symptoms, and
painful menstrual periods. (5)

This supplement is often used by women with endometriosis and seems to provide some good results in reducing pain. It helps to reduce pain and the benefits can usually be felt within a couple of months.

**Raspberry Leaf**

Raspberry leaf tea is recommended for easing menstrual cramps and helps relax the uterus. Researchers do not know the active compound of Raspberry, but they speculate that it might be Pycnogenol. Pycnogenol is a compound of natural chemicals found in the bark of the European pine tree. (see Pycnogenol above)

**Serrapeptase**

*Serrapeptase* is a proteolytic enzyme (Proteolysis is the breakdown of proteins into smaller polypeptides or amino acids.) This enzyme is naturally processed and was discovered in the silkworm intestine. Studies reveal it has very powerful anti-inflammatory effects.
Serrapeptase digests non-living tissue, blood clots, cysts, arterial plaque and inflammation in all forms. This supplement is used often by women with endometriosis to great effect for pain and inflammation. You can purchase serrapeptase as a supplement in various strengths and it is best to start low and work your way up in dose strength.

**Sulphur (Methyl Sulphonyl Methane - MSM)**

One of the most significant uses of MSM as a supplement is its demonstrated ability to relieve pain and inflammation. MSM is an anti-oxidant that helps to clean the blood and flush toxins trapped in our cells.

MSM can help relieve symptoms in a variety of ways. It blocks pain messages that travel to the brain along nonmyelinated nerve fibers called C fibers. This results in relief of the deep aching sensation that is characteristic of chronic conditions like Endometriosis.
**Selenium**

When selenium is taken together with vitamin E it has been **reported to decrease inflammation associated with Endometriosis**, as well as immune system booster. Interestingly it has been found that in cattle, endometriosis can be due to selenium deficiency. So, farmers supplement their cattle with selenium along with other vital nutrients in the form of a salt lick.

Selenium can be easily supplemented and the benefits are enhanced when taken together with vitamin E. For women with endometriosis which causes inflammatory, this nutrient duo may aid healing of the skin and help protect the heart, blood vessels, skin, joints, and other parts of the body prone to inflammation.

*Eating 2 to 3 brazils nuts a day will help get your selenium levels up.*
Health benefits of selenium

~ Boost immune system
~ Has anti-inflammatory properties
~ Helps prevent cancer
~ Rich in anti-oxidant properties
~ Helps regulate thyroid hormone
~ Helps prevent heart disease
~ Protect against stroke
~ Helps prevent fungal & bacterial infections
~ May help boost fertility
To wrap up

Most of these supplements are safe to add to your regime and can be used on a daily basis. However, it is advised to have a break from supplements occasionally just to let your body reset.

If you wish to try using herbs it may be advised to seek advice from a trained herbalist or Naturopath to get guidance on dosage and to ensure there are no contraindications with any medications you are currently taking.

Taking supplements is not a compromise for a balanced nutritious diet, but certain supplements can support your system and give nature a bit of a ‘leg-up’ and ensure you are getting the nutrients your body needs.

Your body needs all the support it can get right now ♥♥

with healing thoughts

Carolyn
Useful links

For more diet advice to help endometriosis – you will find more information at: https://www.endo-resolved.com/diet.html

There is a collection of articles regarding diet, nutrition and supplements at: https://www.endo-resolved.com/diet_advice.html

If you want more advice join our supportive Facebook group HERE

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