

A  
GUY'S  
GUIDE  
TO STAYING HEALTHY

by Gaetano Morello, BSc, ND

There's a lot to focus on as a guy gets older. Aches and pains become a regular part of life. Gray hair and even baldness can start to make an appearance. But there are steps men can take to stay healthy and vibrant no matter their age. In this brief article, we'll explore a wide range of vital nutrients men need to support a healthy cardiovascular system, prostate gland, digestive system, and brain—all key components of a healthy male body.

## Got Heart?

One in three males has some form of cardiovascular disease—and too often these cases result in death, making heart disease the #1 killer in America. That's why it's vital to maintain good heart health at every age.

The most important element in life is not food or water, it is none other than oxygen. Oxygen needs to be carried to every single cell in the body to produce the body's electricity known as ATP. This critical process is reliant on the body's cardiovascular system, more specifically its extensive blood vessel

network. There are over 60,000 miles of blood vessels in the body, taking blood—including oxygen filled red blood cells—from the heart to every single cell that makes up the human body. How blood is able to flow through these massive distances is not solely based on the pressure generated by the heart, but more importantly on the elasticity of the blood vessels.

Mesoglycan is a building block of blood vessels. Taken as a supplement, it significantly reduces the arterial stiffness and swelling associated with atherosclerosis—a disease in which plaque builds up inside your arteries and “hardens” them, taking away their elasticity. Mesoglycan not only improves this elasticity, but also helps reduce inflammation within blood vessels (vasculitis), improving blood circulation. Mesoglycan is so effective because it produces glycosaminoglycans (GAGs) which help to repair the inner walls of blood vessels, known as the endothelium. While your body already produces mesoglycan naturally, it's smart to seek out a supplement to ensure your cardiovascular system is



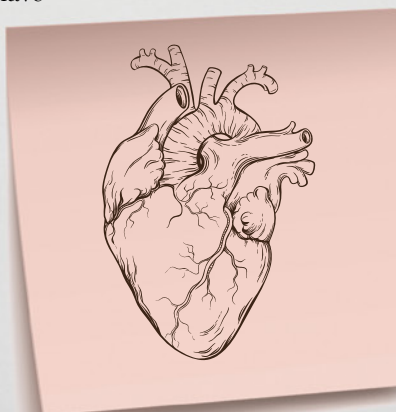


1 in 3  
males has  
some form of  
cardiovascular  
disease

getting all it needs. Look for a high-quality porcine source and take at least 50 mg daily. But check with your doctor if you are already taking drugs that decrease blood clotting, such as warfarin, clopidogrel, or even aspirin.

Grape Seed Extract is a great source of heart healthy antioxidants that can help prevent artery-damaging oxidation. The secret to grape seed extract's power comes from compounds called oligomeric proanthocyanidin complexes (OPCs) which help your body produce glutathione, an important antioxidant that protects DNA and strengthens immune function. In addition, studies suggest that grape seed extract lowers systolic blood pressure and heart rate, strengthens capillaries, and improves blood oxygen circulation throughout the body. It also counters venous insufficiency (a condition where veins can't send blood from the legs back to the heart), encourages wound healing, and reduces inflammation.

A cardio-essential mineral that most men don't get nearly enough of is magnesium. And men over 70 are most likely to have the lowest intakes of this mineral. While every organ in your body needs magnesium, the highest levels are found in the heart. Research

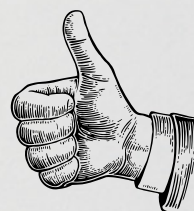


reveals a possible link between a lower risk of coronary heart disease in men and increased magnesium intake. Magnesium not only helps regulate blood pressure, it protects the cardiovascular system from cell damage which could lead to angina and even heart attack.

Another cardiovascular foundational is an omega-3 supplement. There are thousands of studies supporting the benefits of omega-3s for heart health, and it's something all men should take daily. Just make sure you take a high-quality omega-3 supplement that is free from chemical impurities and a fishy after taste.

For a healthy heart, supplementation is vital, but so is limiting your intake of coffee, soda, alcohol, and salt, which can undermine your levels of this key mineral.

## Protect Your Prostate



If a man lives long enough, he will likely experience an enlarged prostate—technically known as benign prostatic hyperplasia or BPH. In fact, an enlarged prostate occurs in about half of men age 50 and in 90 percent of men over 80. In addition, over 250,000 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year alone, making prostate care a priority for men of all ages. Three nutrients can provide potent prostate protection.

If you've got BPH, it's likely you know the location of every bathroom in town. When the prostate is enlarged, extra pressure is put on the urethra—the tube that carries urine from the bladder and out of the body. As a result of this pressure, some urine is retained in the bladder. Because of this, those affected

may often feel the need to urinate more frequently or more urgently, especially at night. However, the Icelandic herb Angelica has been clinically shown to decrease the number of nighttime trips to the toilet. It's especially effective for sufferers with low bladder capacity.

While BPH may be inevitable, there are some natural ways to lower your risk of prostate cancer, starting with curcumin. Recent research shows that curcumin can slow prostate tumor growth by inhibiting cell tissue growth. Curcumin also reduces the expression of pro-inflammatory cytokines, which results in fewer cases of the cancer spreading to other organs. But since curcumin is poorly absorbed by the body, it's critical to look for a more bioavailable form of the supplement, like BCM-95 curcumin, to ensure you are getting all its benefits.

Pomegranate seed extract is another powerful nutrient in the arsenal against prostate cancer. Preliminary studies suggest that pomegranate seed may slow the rate at which prostate-specific antigen (PSA) levels double, especially after surgery or radiation treatment. Pomegranate seed extract may also encourage cancer cell death—a process known as apoptosis.



## Building a Good Gut

You may not give your digestive tract a lot of thought—until something

goes wrong. When it does, it can manifest as a fleeting case of nausea or heartburn, or as a chronic ailment like Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis. One common culprit undermining digestive health is systemic inflammation, often triggered by today's Standard American Diet (SAD) which is low in fiber and nutrients, and high in pro-inflammatory sugar, unhealthy fats, and chemical additives. But two targeted anti-inflammatory herbs can fortify your gastrointestinal tract and ease symptoms.

Boswellia is a natural anti-inflammatory used for centuries in Ayurvedic medicine to soothe digestive woes. Clinical trials have shown beneficial results when using boswellia in the treatment of a number of chronic inflammatory diseases like Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. Supplemental boswellia was also found to inhibit 5-lipoxygenase, a key enzyme that contributes to the inflammation in colitis, thanks to a compound called acetyl-11-keto-beta-boswellic acid (AKBA). But not all boswellia supplements are beneficial. Unstandardized boswellia supplements may contain high amounts of a pro-inflammatory compound called beta-boswellic acid that interferes with the herb's anti-inflammatory benefits. Some supplements also contain as little as 1 percent AKBA. To get the most benefit from your boswellia, look for a supplement that includes a proprietary form of boswellia known as BosPure, which is standardized to contain a minimum of 10 percent AKBA.

Many men, especially as they age, often experience two other ailments rooted in inflammation—heartburn and stomach ulcer. And too often, they rely on prescription and over-the-counter remedies like ranitidine and





famotidine to get them through the discomfort of these digestive issues. However, deglycyrrhizinated licorice, or DGL, may help relieve the symptoms of indigestion or gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), as well as ongoing

inflammation of the lining of the stomach (chronic gastritis). It's also been effectively used in the treatment of gastric and duodenal ulcers. While most DGL supplements come as chewables, the strong licorice taste can be off-putting. Opt instead to get relief via a capsule that has been standardized to contain 3.5% glabridin—the healing component in DGL.

Even if you've been lucky enough to sidestep these common digestive problems, taking proactive measures is still a smart move. Perhaps the most popular way to support overall digestive health is with probiotics.

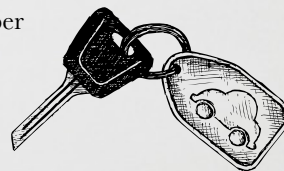
These benevolent bacteria help to guard your body against an array of digestive disorders such as diarrhea, irritable bowel syndrome, and inflammatory bowel disease. For optimal digestive health, choose a supplement that contains *Lactobacillus plantarum*, *Lactobacillus*

*rhamnosus*, and *Bifidobacterium bifidum*—all of which aid the intestines in curbing diarrhea, fighting off bacterial infections, maintaining intestinal permeability, and suppressing the growth of gas-producing bacteria. Most importantly, these probiotics help

with proper food digestion and the absorption of vitamins and minerals.

## Better Brainpower

If you've ever found yourself trying to recall where you left your car keys or grappling to remember someone's name, you've likely wondered if you were suffering from age-related memory loss. The truth is, stress and inflammation can take a toll on the ability to focus and stay sharp as a man ages. Fortunately, making sure your brain gets all the nutrients it needs to maintain healthy cognitive function can be as easy as adding a few key supplements to your daily routine. As a bonus, the following nutrients also help to guard against diseases like dementia and Alzheimer's disease.



Choline is an essential nutrient for a healthy brain. It works by stimulating the production of the key

neurotransmitter acetylcholine, which is responsible for memory, mental clarity, and the healthy formation of synaptic connections between neurons. Although the human body already makes a small amount of choline, it is usually not enough

for optimal cerebral health. So it's not surprising that studies show that men with lower levels of choline can suffer from poor cognitive performance. Boosting choline can lead to enhanced focus and the ability to concentrate, including faster reaction times to



stimulus. It is crucial for learning of all kinds. What's more, supplemental choline is often used to counteract depression, memory loss, dementia, and even Alzheimer's disease.

I've already mentioned curcumin as an effective anti-inflammatory when it comes to battling prostate issues, but it has many brain benefits too. As men get older, our brains get "backed up" with amyloid buildup, decreasing the brain's memory and learning capabilities. It's a degenerative process that affects all of us. Curcumin, however, has been shown to boost brain function by reducing inflammation and improving blood flow to the brain. In numerous studies, participants who took a curcumin supplement displayed improved performance on certain tasks designed to evaluate memory and alertness. Curcumin can even protect against some dangers that cause neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.



*Rhodiola*

Minimizing stress is an important part of maintaining a sharp and healthy brain. Ashwagandha has been documented in Ayurvedic and Greek medicines to combat stress. This adaptogenic herb can help curb anxious feelings and regulate mood by lowering levels of the stress hormone cortisol. New research has found that the neuroprotective properties of ashwagandha root extract can enhance the ability to concentrate by as much as 76 percent while reducing forgetfulness by 57 percent. Other studies suggest that long-term use may also help to guard against neurodegenerative disorders like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's by boosting levels of the powerful antioxidant glutathione.

*Ashwagandha root extract can enhance the ability to concentrate by as much as*

**76%**

*while reducing forgetfulness by*

**57%**

Rhodiola is another adaptogen that combats fatigue and helps the brain cope with stress by supporting healthy levels of the neurotransmitters serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine. Studies show that rhodiola works quickly to enhance mood, sleep, attention span, mental focus, and memory. This multi-tasking adaptogen has even been shown to elevate exercise performance.

Combined with a healthy diet based on whole foods and a regular exercise routine, these supplements can keep you going strong at every age. And what better way to manage the health issues that uniquely face a man than by taking charge of your health and well-being naturally? ■



**Gaetano Morello, BSc, ND,** is a licensed naturopathic physician practicing in West Vancouver, British Columbia. He is a clinician at the newly formed Complex Chronic Diseases Program at BC Women's

Hospital in Vancouver, making him the first Naturopathic Doctor working at a leading North American Hospital. Dr. Gaetano is the author of *Whole Body Cleansing and Cleanse: Ultimate Inside-Out Approach*, as well as a contributing author to *A Textbook of Natural Medicine* and a member of the Quality Assurance Committee for the College of Naturopathic Physicians of British Columbia.