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# PLANET HEALTH NEWSLETTER

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## MENOPAUSE & YOUR MIND

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Though hot flashes get most of the menopause attention, unfortunately, these physical symptoms are not the whole story of the challenge of menopause. Menopause can bring with it a whole host of psychological struggles, including depression, anxiety and insomnia.

The time around menopause is a time of increased risk of depression. Anxiety can be as common as hot flashes, and about 50 percent of menopausal women experience problems sleeping. Even perimenopause can bring mood symptoms for 10-20 percent of women.

### **Saffron: Menopause & Depression**

Hot flashes are horrible. Menopause that comes with hot flashes and depression can be unbearable.

Saffron is a remarkable, but still little known, antidepressant herb. A new study looked at menopausal women who were suffering from both hot flashes, and major depressive disorder. The 56 women in this double-blind study were suffering from 14 hot flashes a week or more. They were given a placebo or two 15 mg capsules of saffron stigma extract a day for six weeks. The saffron worked way better than the placebo. There was significantly greater improvement on the Hot Flash-Related Daily Interference Scale and on the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale. The saffron was as safe as placebo; a big advantage over hormone therapy and antidepressants.

## ST. JOHN'S WORT

### St. John's Wort: Menopause & Depression

This new study found that the great antidepressant herb St. John's Wort is great for menopause too because it helped not only the depression, which was expected, but also the hot flashes. Eight percent of the herb group was depression free versus 5.7 percent of the placebo group, and both the frequency and intensity of hot flashes decreased significantly more in the St. John's Wort group.

## BLACK COHOSH

### Black Cohosh: Menopause & Depression, Anxiety & Insomnia

What herb can help with the physical symptoms of menopause, depression, anxiety and insomnia? Black cohosh: the best researched natural treatment for menopause. That research clearly shows that, in addition to its mastery of physical symptoms from hot flashes to vaginal dryness and thinning, black cohosh is better than HRT or valium for alleviating the depression, anxiety, and irritability, nervousness and sleep disturbances that menopause can bring.

## FENUGREEK

### Fenugreek: Menopause & Depression, Anxiety, Insomnia & Desire

The list of menopausal symptoms herbs can help keeps getting longer. A double-blind study gave 500 mg of fenugreek seed husk extract or placebo twice a day to women who were experiencing three to five hot flashes daily. The women on placebo had little improvement: from 34.25 to 30.49 on the Greene Climacteric Scale the women on fenugreek had significantly greater improvement from 34.83 to 19.64. Hot flashes decreased by 47.8 percent on fenugreek, and 32 percent of the women had no hot flashes at all. Fenugreek was also superior to placebo for psychological symptoms.. Mood swings, depression, anxiety and loss of sexual desire all improved significantly more.. The women who took fenugreek experienced improvements in physical and mental fatigue, concentration and interest in daily work as well as overall health, mental health and well-being.

So, natural supplements can help, not only the whole host of physical symptoms of menopause, but the whole range of psychological symptoms too, from depression, anxiety and insomnia to loss of sexual desire.

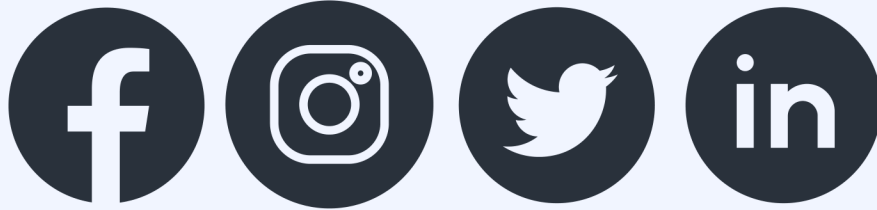
# WHAT'S NEW?

## HOST DEFENSE *Mushrooms*



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