

# The Yammer

EVERGREEN WELLNESS

MAY 2022

Hard to believe how fast this year is going. It has been a long Winter/Spring; hopefully, we finally get some decent heat and sunshine ☀

Few reminders for this month:

1. Dr. Chris Yam, D.TCM is expanding his hours - he will now be working Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 3pm.
2. Dr. Katia De Marco, ND is still working Wed. - Fri. from 9am to 4pm, with a walk-in clinic (for acute symptoms) on Fridays from 10am to 2pm.
3. Dr. De Marco will be putting on a DIY Immune-Support Elderberry Syrup workshop in celebration of Naturopathic Week. See details below.
4. As Health BC has changed some covid restrictions in March, please take note of our requirements (see page 2) for our clinic.
5. We will be closed for Victoria Day on Monday May 23, 2022.



We are still working on new changes and have noted what's happened so far, below.  
We thank you all for your patience and continued dedication and support of our clinic.

The days are longer, everything is in bloom, and, we hope, better weather is on the way :)

## DIY Immune-Support Elderberry Syrup Workshop

Come join Dr. Katia De Marco, ND to learn about boosting your immune system and how to make your own Elderberry Syrup to keep you and your family in tip-top immune shape.



At Evergreen Wellness on

**Thursday May 19, 2022**

**6:00pm - 7:30pm**

**Cost \$25.00/person** (cost for supplies)

**\* You get to take home a bottle of your creation \***

Snacks & Refreshments will be available

**Pre-registration required!**

**Register by Monday May 16, 2022**

Call (250) 881-7800 to reserve your spot.

### **Bonus Giveaway:**

There will be a draw for a free gift (Buffered C/ Methyl B12/ Arnica cream) for one lucky attendant!



## Covid/Mask Update

While masks are no longer required by BCCDC in public places, please **remember** that **we are a health clinic that does have immuno-compromised patients**; therefore, we do **require** the following upon entering (and while inside) our clinic:

- \* **Wash/sanitize your hands;**
- \* **Cough/sneeze into sleeve/tissue;**
- \* **Mask required if other patients are present in the waiting room; and**
- \* **If you are sick, please do not enter.**

We want you to feel safe, so if you would feel more comfortable with us wearing a mask while you are here, please do let us know :)

*“Yet though it be the chilliest May with least of sun and most of showers, its wind and dew, its night and day, bring up the flowers.”*

*~ Christina Georgina Rossetti*

## Ch-Ch-Ch-Changes...

**Quick reminder of the changes we have made so far (since February 1):**

1. An increase in price on most of our supplements.  
*Due to our suppliers increasing their prices due to the rising shortages and prices of raw materials*
2. An increase in price for Consultations with Dr. Christopher Yam, D.TCM.
3. Dr. Katia De Marco, ND., is now registered with Health Insurance BC (Carecard/MSP), so **IF** you are on Disability or Income Assistance, your BC Health Card coverage can re-imburse you \$23 of your consultation fee (*they only cover a portion of consultations and Acupuncture*).
4. Dr. Chris Yam, D.TCM is expanding his hours; he will now be working **Tuesday - Friday from 10am to 3pm.**
5. We have decided to forego Fullscript (alternative supplement ordering platform), at this time, as it turned out to not be the right platform for us.  
We are starting to get supplements in more regularly now, but still advise everyone to pre-order, in advance, what you need so that you are able to get your supplements.

We are still working hard to add **new** services and re-introduce some of our old ones by Summer.

# Top 3 Nutrients for Your Overall Health and Wellbeing

(and what to look for in a supplement)

Walking into the supplement section at a health food store can sometimes be a little intimidating. As a naturopathic doctor, I see the benefits to having a wide variety of vitamins, minerals, herbs and nutraceuticals readily available for patients. However, along with this benefit can also come some difficulties. It is easy to quickly feel overwhelmed or bewildered if you are not well-informed. From general questions such as, “There are so many supplements here, which ones are the best for me?”, to the more specific “How do I pick between the different options for magnesium?”, there are many considerations to take when perusing down a supplement aisle.

For some guidance on your next trip to the health food store, here is a list of my top 3 supplements for general health, along with savvy tips on what to look out for in each.

## **Magnesium**

Magnesium is a mineral supplement that many people are familiar with. It is one of the most versatile supplements, and is one that I prescribe very frequently. This is because it is an essential nutrient in the body, and is needed in over 600 different essential chemical reactions in the body.

Magnesium is needed for:

- Energy production
- Insulin sensitivity (and prevention of insulin resistance and diabetes)
- DNA and protein synthesis
- Vitamin D production
- Maintaining healthy blood pressure
- Cardiovascular health
- And many others

Magnesium deficiency is common in Canadians and in other developed countries. For this reason, supplementing with magnesium can make significant improvements in health.

When confronted with the magnesium section in a supplement aisle, there are often many forms to choose from. Here are a few forms of magnesium that you are likely to see, and tips on how to choose one:

### Magnesium citrate

This is probably the most common and widely available. It is well-absorbed by the body, and is used to increase low levels of magnesium in the body. This form will also draw fluid into the intestine more than other forms, making it a **good choice for alleviating constipation**, but not the best option if you do not have constipation, or worse still, if you are already experiencing loose stool.

**Tip:** Use magnesium citrate to increase magnesium levels or to relieve constipation. Avoid (especially at higher doses) if loose stool is a concern.

### Magnesium bisglycinate

Magnesium bisglycinate (or magnesium glycinate) is the second most common found on shelves. This form is very well-absorbed, and unlike magnesium citrate, is **much less likely to cause GI side effects** such as loose stool. The “glycinate” in this form is very gentle on the digestive tract. Additionally, the glycine molecule attached to this magnesium is relaxing to the nervous system. It is used to promote rest and relaxation.

**Tip:** Use magnesium bisglycinate to increase magnesium levels, and to help improve quality of sleep. Not the best choice to relieve constipation as it may not impact the GI tract enough.

### Magnesium threonate

This form is less well-known. Magnesium threonate is a form of magnesium that can cross the blood brain barrier (the protective lining around the brain). This makes magnesium threonate a very suitable option for concerns such as **cognitive health, age-related dementia, concussion support, and anxiety**, among others.

**Tip:** Useful for supporting cognitive health. Keep in mind this form is often more expensive.



## **Vitamin D**

Vitamin D is necessary for bone health, blood sugar regulation, immune system function (including autoimmune conditions), and maintaining a balanced mood, among other functions.

Like magnesium, it can be common for Canadians to have deficient or insufficient levels of vitamin D, making supplementation an important part of maintaining health. As a naturopathic doctor, I will often recommend vitamin D injections or high dose oral supplementation for patients who show low levels on their lab test results, as this can make significant impacts to their health concerns.

A lesser known fact that should be kept in mind when choosing a vitamin D supplement is to look for a **vitamin D3 supplement that contains vitamin K2**. This has to do with the roles that vitamin D and vitamin K2 play with regards to calcium in the body. Vitamin D is needed to properly absorb calcium; without it, we are unable to adequately absorb calcium into our body. Vitamin K2, on the other hand, is responsible for ensuring that calcium is sent to the right place, for example to our bones. Without enough vitamin K2, there is an increased risk of calcification of our blood vessels (aka calcium accumulating in our blood vessels). When taking long-term calcium or vitamin D supplementation, it is important therefore to include vitamin K2 as well.

**Tip:** Choose drops or capsules that have vitamin D3 and K2 together. While not all vitamin D supplements have K2, most bone support supplements do include both.

## **B-Complex**

B vitamins are another very common supplement. This complex is made up of 8 different vitamins that are beneficial for a wide variety of health concerns. The most notable are: stress and burnout support, female menstrual concerns, and energy production.

In today's modern world, we can easily decrease our B-vitamins without meaning to via: being on birth control, alcohol consumption, and long-term stress. Additionally, certain medications also deplete certain B vitamins, for example metformin, a drug commonly used to treat diabetes, depletes vitamin B12.

The biggest consideration when choosing a B-complex is to find a supplement that includes the active forms of the B-vitamins. Look for the words "Active Form" on the front label.

The active forms of each B vitamin will be written as follows:

- B1: benfotiamine
- B2: riboflavin-5-phosphate sodium
- B3 (niacin): inositol hexaniacinate
- B5: calcium-D-pantothenate
- B6: pyridoxal-5-phosphate, "P6P"
- B7: biotin
- B9 (folate): 5-methyltetrahydrofolate (5-MTHF)
- B12: methylcobalamin

The lesser active forms will often have "hydrochloride" in the name, or will not include the above terms. For example, vitamin B1 will be listed as thiamine-hydrochloride, or thiamine-HCl.

*Another worthy mention:* be aware of your various sources of B-vitamins. B vitamins are often added into other supplement formulas. This is especially common in supplements for adrenal fatigue or energy support. **Be mindful as having too much of certain B vitamins can lead to side effects.** In particular, be aware of how much vitamin B6 you are taking in total: *do not exceed more than 200 mg of B6 per day*, as higher doses have been linked to neuropathies.

### **Bonus Tip:**

Always look at the non-medicinal ingredients list!

The fewer non-medicinal ingredients, the better. A supplement with more than 6 is suspect, and may contain more fillers than necessary. This can decrease the strength of the supplement, and can also increase the chance of having an adverse reaction.

Ingredients to avoid: artificial colours, titanium dioxide, magnesium silicate (aka talc), and hidden forms of sugar (look for dextrose, dextrin, fructose, maltose, maltodextrin, etc.).

Always consult a healthcare provider when considering starting a new nutraceutical. I hope these tips have provided insight and reassurance the next time you are purchasing some common supplements for you or your family.

In health,  
Dr. Katia