

Natural health



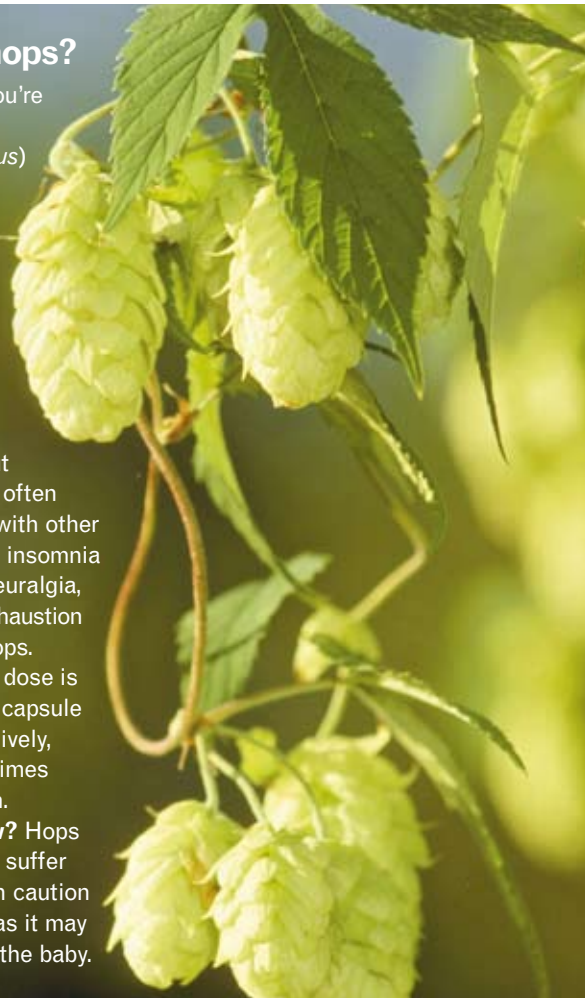
Look after your body and wellbeing naturally with **Jan Purser's** essential monthly guide to alternative medicine, health and nutrition.

Should I take ... hops?

Why would I need it? You're probably already familiar with hops (*Humulus lupulus*) – one of the main ingredients in beer. But it's also a traditional herbal medicine used to treat insomnia, restlessness and nervous tension. Particularly useful if you're going through an anxious patch, it smooths the way without making you drowsy. You'll often find hops in combination with other calming herbs for treating insomnia and stress. People with neuralgia, indigestion and nervous exhaustion can also get relief from hops.

How much? An average dose is 750mg to 1.5g in tablet or capsule form twice a day. Alternatively, take 1.5ml twice to three times daily in liquid extract form.

Anything I should know? Hops may not be suitable if you suffer from depression. Use with caution while breastfeeding, too, as it may have a sedative effect on the baby.



quick cure

Tired? Just add water

If you've been struggling with fatigue, it could simply be due to dehydration. Aim to drink about eight glasses of filtered water a day, having a few of them first thing in the morning. Cut down on caffeine, too – reduce your intake to no more than one to two weaker caffeinated drinks, such as green tea, per day. You'll be surprised how simple it is to feel more sparky. If you still need more of a boost, then take a good multivitamin supplement that's rich in the B vitamins. Also, consider taking a coenzyme Q10 supplement. CoQ10 is a nutrient that helps to increase energy production in the cells.

Jan Purser Dip.Nutr., DRT, is a naturopathic nutrition consultant, remedial therapist and public speaker. If you have any questions on diet, natural health or nutrition, write to Natural Solutions, PO Box 3, South Fremantle WA 6162, or email ns@foodbodyandhealth.com.au We regret Jan is unable to personally answer letters.

Not happy?

Ask Jan

Q I've heard that roasting nuts lessens their health benefits. Is this true?

T.S. via email.

A Recent research indicates that raw nuts are preferable to roasted nuts. Raw nuts contain more anti-oxidants and healthy fats than nuts that are roasted at high temperatures. Studies on almonds, pistachios and peanuts have shown that the roasting process alters some of the good fats into unhealthy fats. Boiled peanuts were also found to have many more health benefits than dry-roasted or oil-roasted peanuts. So, while unsalted roasted nuts do offer protein and good amounts of beneficial fats, it appears that the raw product is much better for you.

Fighting free radicals

A new study has shown that a healthy diet may help control common mental disorders. Researchers found that autism, dementia, schizophrenia, eating disorders, sleep disorders and attention deficit disorders are associated with higher oxidative stress. Oxidative stress occurs when the body makes more free radicals than can be balanced by the anti-oxidants we eat, so increasing the intake of essential fatty acids and anti-oxidants may help with these conditions. Fatty acids are found in nuts, seeds, avocados and olive oil. Anti-oxidants are found in tea, herbs, wholegrains, and fruit and vegies, such as blueberries, apples and tomatoes. Eating less refined carbs, such as white bread, may also help.

Source: *BMC Psychiatry*, April 2008



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