



This week...

Replenish Your System with Supplements

Disclaimer: This issue of ReFresh is not intended as medical advice or as a substitute for professional care. The BCPVPA offers this article for your interest, with information based on the author's consultations with physicians, a psychiatrist, and a naturopath, and sourced from the publications referenced below. There is a range of research and opinions on the impact or lack of impact of supplements. **Before taking any supplements, do your research and speak to a certified healthcare provider to ensure supplements are safe and healthy for you.**

How can we help our brains and bodies recuperate as they work hard for us day to day? How do we support and replenish our bodies and give back to *them* just as much as they give to *us*?

There are many ways we can replenish our bodies, including hydration, rest, nutrition, and exercise. Another way to support our systems, particularly our brains, is through **supplements**.

Why supplements? As we know, during longer periods of stress, our bodies respond by releasing stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol. Chronic levels of these stress hormones can have detrimental effects on all of our organs. That is why stress is associated with so many medical (e.g. cardiovascular disease, cancers, digestive disorders) and mental health (e.g. depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder) conditions.

Research also confirms that stress can deplete many essential nutrients in our bodies. This is particularly important as the nutrients depleted by stress have crucial roles to play. Here are some nutrients that research suggests are depleted by stress, and that you may want to consider replenishing¹:

1. **Magnesium.** Magnesium is a mineral that has hundreds of essential roles throughout our body and low levels are associated with several mental and physical conditions. Low magnesium levels are often associated with depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder. *Author's note: Magnesium is a common and key factor often brought forth by professional health teams. (Rochelle Morandini, BCPVPA Director of Member Health & Well-being)*
2. **Zinc.** Zinc is another important mineral that has hundreds of important roles in the body. Low zinc is commonly seen in depression and anxiety. Zinc is also considered to have natural antidepressant and anti-stress effects.
3. **Iron.** Stress can also lower our levels of iron in the body. For example, both psychological stress and excess exercise are associated with changes in iron concentrations. Low iron levels will make you feel 'heavy' and tired.
4. **Niacin (vitamin B3).** Niacin is an essential vitamin which every part of our body requires to function properly. Niacin is believed to have positive mental health effects and is also associated with cardiovascular health.

Supplements are certainly not the silver bullet for your health. They are meant to be a component of your overall self care, particularly during times of stress, to enable your body and mind to enhance resilience and recovery. Most of us have been bearing stress for a long period of time, so improving how we feel will also take time.

In future articles of ReFresh we will discuss how supplements can help you mitigate stress and support your adrenal system!

Learn about other natural ways to reduce cortisol in your system:

- [Cleveland Clinic | How to Reduce Cortisol and Turn Down the Dial on Stress](#)
- [Psychology Today | Magnesium and the Brain – the Original Chill Pill](#)
- [The Health Line | Vitamin B Complex Benefits](#)

If you would like to contribute, or have ideas about what you would like to see in the **ReFresh** series, we would love to hear from you: contact rochelle@bcpvpa.bc.ca.

Sources

¹ Personalized Integrated Therapy (2020). "4 Nutrients Depleted During Times of High Stress".
<https://pitherapy.com.au/4-nutrients-depleted-during-times-of-high-stress/>