

Adaptogen Chart - Created by Maria Noel Groves at Wintergreen Botanicals (with some borrowing from Michael Moore)

Common Name	Latin Name	Plant Family	Habitat/ Growing	Part Used	Energy Effects	Tendency	Brain	Body	CNS/Mood	Thyroid	Metabolism	Hormones/Sexual	Immune	Pain/Inflammation	Heart	Toxins/ Detoxification	GI	Effects on Tissues	Side Effects
Ginseng	<i>Panax spp Asian -P. ginseng (crude white, cured red); American-P. quinquefolias</i>	<i>Ginseng/ Aralia</i>	China/America. Mountain woods, difficult to grow, needs several years to harvest.	Root, sometimes leaves	Stimulating Adaptogen (Red = most, then white, American = moderate)	Warming (Red = most, then white, American = moderate)	Energizing	Energizing	May aggravate mania and anxiety		May reduce blood sugar in diabetes.	Libido, fertility. May increase weight of prostate glands, seminal vesicles, increase sperm count. Studied for erectile disorder	Protects against tumors, viruses		Protects against high cholesterol. May aggravate hypertension, especially at high doses.	Protects against liver toxins (chloroform, amphetamines, etc.), radiation.		Nourishes, strengthens	May overstimulate or warm.
Rhodiola	<i>Rhodiola rosea</i>	<i>Sedum/ Rock Rose</i>	Siberia. Alpine and coastal cliffs, difficult to grow. Needs several years to harvest.	Root	Stimulating Adaptogen	Aromatic, astringent/drying, somewhat warming	Improves mental performance, test taking. Nerve restorative and protecting.	Improves synthesis of ATP. Appears to modulate stress hormone production.	Aids chronic fatigue syndrome, depression. May aggravate insomnia, mania, anxiety.		May improve weight loss along with exercise/diet.		Possible immune tonic				Digestive stimulant, astringent. May upset stomach.	Drying	May aggravate anxiety, insomnia, mania, bioloar.
Eleuthero (Siberian Ginseng)	<i>Eleutherococcus senticosus</i>	<i>Ginseng/ Aralia</i>	Siberia, moderately easy to grow. Needs several years to harvest.	Root, maybe leaves	Stimulating Adaptogen	Somewhat warming	Improves mental performance	Improves physical performance	May lessen depression and aggravate mania and anxiety			May boost libido	Immune-modulating. Often used in convalescence. Improved ability to withstand physical and mental stressors.		May aggravate hypertension at high doses, modulate at modest doses. May aggravate palpitations.				May aggravate insomnia, high blood pressure.
Codonopsis (Dang Shen, Poor Man's Ginseng)	<i>Codonopsis spp</i>	<i>Bellflower</i>	China. Easy to grow in the garden (tender vine). Harvest after 3 years. Requires tricky post-harvest processing.	Root, sometimes leaves	Semi-Stimulating Adaptogen	Somewhat warming, nourishing, sweet	Weaker "ginseng"	Used for fatigue, in convalescence, cancer					Immune-modulating. Often used in convalescence.					Nourishes, strengthens	May overstimulate.
Cordyceps	<i>Ophiocordyceps sinensis (syn Cordyceps sinensis)</i>	<i>Mushroom</i>	China. Often cultivated in the lab. Naturally grows on caterpillars in China.	Fruiting body, mycellium	Semi-Stimulating Adaptogen	Somewhat warming, building	Energizing, possible oxytocin synergy	Energizing, used for fatigue, libido, athletics	May lessen depression and aggravate mania and anxiety			Libido/fertility herb. May improve repro system, possible oxytocin support	Immune modulating		Stimulant effects may be noted in heart			Nourishes, strengthens	May overstimulate. Mushroom allergies.
Reishi (Lingzhi Mushroom)	<i>Ganoderma lucidum, local = G. tsugae</i>	<i>Mushroom</i>	China/Local. Wood conk. G. tsugae grows wild on hemlock trees. Not too hard to cultivate.	Fruiting body, mycellium (mycellium may be weaker)	Balancing Adaptogen	Neutral temperature, bitter, nourishing	Deep energy, longevity, antioxidant	Deep energy, vitality	Aids insomnia, possibly anxiety				Immune modulating, tonic, often used in respiratory health and cancer	Anti-inflammatory	Heart tonic, calms heart shen	Protects liver		Nourishes, strengthens	Mushroom allergies.
Ashwagandha	<i>Withania somnifera</i>	<i>Nightshade</i>	India. Grow it as you would tomatoes. Harvest in 1+ years. Treat as annual in cold climates. Dry first.	Root, sometimes leaves	Relaxing Adaptogen with deep energy	Strengthens vital force. Mildly warming.	Deep energy yet nourishes fried nerves	Deep energy, vitality. Often used for fatigue-nervous related disorders (lyme, fibromyalgia, MS).	Tonifies nervous system.	Mildly boosts thyroid T3 and T4.	Balances cortisol, may aid weight loss	Libido/fertility herb. May improve repro system, especially sperm.	Immune, autoimmune, and respiration system tonic.	Anti-inflammatory, useful in many types of pain - algia, autoimmune			Tonifies digestive system		Nightshade reactions. Caution in hyperthyroid, pregnancy.
Maca	<i>Lepidium meyenii</i>	<i>Turnip/ Brassica</i>	Peru's Andes Mountains. Not possible to cultivate here.	Root	Balancing Adaptogen	Sweet, nourishing, building, nutrient-dense	Modest energy	Modest energy	Mildly improves mood	Goitrogenic?		Libido/fertility herb. May improve repro system					Nutrition	Caution in hypothyroid. Raw powder may aggravate GI.	
Schisandra (Schizandra)	<i>Schisandra chinensis</i>	<i>Schisandra</i>	China. Relatively easy to grow, edge of woods/garden, several years until productive. Robust vine.	Berries	Balancing Adaptogen, mildly relaxing	Five flavors: pungent, sour, bitter, salty, sweet.	Improves work performance and memory	Improved athletic performance	Normalizes nervous system, for anxiety, energy, insomnia.				Immune and respiration system tonic.	Reduces inflammation		Protects liver, improves detox and healing	Strongly stimulates digestive function		Caution in ulcers, hyperacidity.
Shatavari	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>	<i>Asparagus</i>	India. Requires warm climate and 2 years of growth.	Root	Balancing Adaptogen	Moistening, nourishing, building			Normalizes			Phytoestrogen, improves cervical mucous, female repro, fertility, libido	Mild immune tonic, possible anti-pathogen, anti-tumor	Anti-inflammatory, targets repro-urinary-gut		Diuretic	Moistening, healing, may fight pathogens	Moistens, nourishes, strengthens	Diuretic.
Gotu Kola (Brahmi)	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	<i>Hydrocotyle/ Ginseng or Parsley (debated)</i>	India. Easy to cultivate. Needs moisture, rich soil. Prefers warmth and indirect sun. Can grow in pot/hang. Tender perennial.	Leaves, aerial parts, whole plant	Relaxing Adaptogen	Cooling, watery, slightly peppery, green	Brain tonic, circulation, restorative, protecting, function, memory, ADHD		Calming. Useful for fatigue, fibromyalgia. Decreases anxiety.					Anti-inflammatory targeting nerves	Increases circulation, improves vascular tone	May improve detoxification	Heals gut tissue, aids in ulcers	Integrity, restoration - Improves wound healing, tissue and collagen repair.	May inhibit fertility. Quality varies/E.coli; fresh organic = best
Holy Basil (Sacred Basil, Tulsi) - various varieties	<i>Ocimum sanctum (syn O. tenuiflorum), sometimes O. gratissimum</i>	<i>Mint</i>	India. Easy to cultivate, like culinary basil. Tender perennial.	Leaves, flowers, aerial parts	Relaxing Adaptogen	Zen energy, protecting, aromatic	For memory, parasympathic response, antioxidant	Used for fatigue, performance under stress	Calming, reduces anxiety, boosts mood	? (deceased T4 but not T3 or T3/T4 ratio rats)	Balances cortisol, may lower blood sugar, stress cravings		Protects against pathogens, aromatic for respiratory	Anti-inflammatory, modest COX2 inhibitor	Likely cardio tonic	Protects against radiation.	Enhances digestive function, inhibiting ulcers	Protects, reduces inflammation	Rare: paradoxical anxiety, digestion/reflux overstimulation. Thyroid? Not in pregnancy.