

## Wild Food: Using Nutrition and Herbs to Boost Resilience and Mitigate Stress



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### Wild Foods in Modern Times

*“The universal health advice to “eat more fruits and vegetables” is woefully out-of-date. We need good advice on which fruits and vegetables to eat.” (Robinson, 2014)*

Eating wild foods is associated with both better tasting and more nutritious foods.

Some tips on selecting plant foods with higher levels of nutrients and phytochemicals:

- Eat seasonally
- Eat foods fresh (broccoli, kale and other vegetables lose their nutrients significantly within 24 hours of harvest)
  - Shop from farmer’s markets, join a CSA (Community Shared Agriculture), start a garden
- Learn more about edible wild plants and weeds in your area (via books and wild food tours)

### Vegetables

- Consume nutrient & phytonutrient rich varieties more often:
  - artichokes
  - avocados
  - asparagus
  - colorful corn
  - whole carrots (not baby) with tops on – orange, purple, red & yellow
  - eats beets (red/purple) and their greens
  - consume more sweet potatoes vs. white potatoes
  - deep red, smaller tomatoes (cherry, grape)
  - cauliflower
  - kale
  - broccoli
  - cabbage
  - Brussel sprouts
  - mustard greens



## **Greens**

- Select more rare varieties (dandelions vs. spinach, purslane vs. lettuce, arugula, radicchio)
- Select bitter greens (higher calcium content in bitter greens) & tart/sour greens
- Select darker color greens or those with some red, purple or reddish brown coloration
- Select whole, unpackaged greens that have more loosely wrapped leaves

## **Onions & Garlic**

- Eat more scallions (green onions (scallions) are over 100 times higher in phytonutrients as white onions)
- Consume shallots, leeks (with greens), garlic and onion chives
- When consuming garlic, slice/mince/press and let sit for 10 minutes prior to cooking

## **Fruits**

- Consume varieties of apples such as: Cortland, Granny Smith, Fuji Honeycrisp, Liberty, Northern Spy, Spartan and others (less common varieties in Farmer's Markets, U-Pick)
- Eat lots of berries: blueberries, blackberries (loganberries, boysenberries, marionberries), strawberries, cranberries, raspberries, aronia berries
- Consume white nectarines, blue, black and red plums, bing cherries when ripe
- Consume red (red flame), purple and black grapes, golden raisins & currants
- Consume blood oranges, Cara Cara oranges, tangelos, red grapefruit, ripe lemons & limes
- Include citrus zest (organic) in your cooking

## **Herbs**

- Cook with savory herbs and spices often
- Include herbal teas and herbal vinegars in your daily diet
- Add fresh herbs to salads and garnish dishes with fresh herbs

## **Reference (Handout):**

Robinson, J. (2014). *Eating on the Wild Side. The Missing Link to Optimum Health*. New York, NY: Little, Brown and Company.

**Dr. Michael Tims** is Director of Herbal Programs at [Maryland University of Integrative Health](#). He has taught at the University of Maryland and Montgomery College, and has had broad experience in the herbal supplement industry as a managing partner of Cash Grocer Natural Foods, as a clinical herbalist, and as an academic researcher focused on the chemical ecology of endangered medicinal plant species. Dr. Tims also collaborated with federal regulators to provide medicinal plant toxicity assessments. He co-developed HerbMed, a web-based herbal database providing access to scientific data on the use and safety of herbal medicine, and he completed an NIH/NIST postdoctoral fellowship developing Botanical Standard Reference Materials.

Some of his research with medicinal plants include exploring the role of lectins as signaling molecules in American Mistletoe (*Phoradendron leucarpum*) to initiate the intercalation of mistletoe and host plant vascular structures; the chemical ecology of *Hydrastis canadensis* rhizosphere and its effect on soil fungi; enzymatic extraction and certification measurements of green tea (*Camellia sinensis*) Standard Reference Materials (SRMs) in leaf powder, extract and finished product forms; development of analytical methods for the simultaneous separation and detection of a full spectrum of secondary metabolites found in kudzu (*Pueria lobata*), soy (*Glycine max*), and red clover (*Trifolium pratense*) and black cohosh (*Actea racemosa*).

His current research interests focus on

1. Understanding idiosyncratic herbal safety events
2. Exploring human evolutionary adaptation to pre-agricultural phytochemistry and the role these *wild foods* might play in maintaining human resilience.
3. Revealing the role plant root secondary metabolites play in rhizosphere ecology and how that ecology influences the makeup of medicinal active chemical constituents.
4. Finding alternatives to animal testing of herbal products to generate toxicological, pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamic data.
5. Pedagogical inquiry into developing more innovative and improvisation thinking skills in graduate students.

Dr. Tims also created and maintains an herbal medicine blog, [Bardo's Calculus](#).

He received his BA in English/Writing from George Mason University and his Ph.D. in the Chemical Ecology of Medicinal Plants from the University of Maryland, College Park.

**Dr. Mary Fry** is an instructor in Nutrition & Integrative Health Department at [Maryland University of Integrative Health](#). She has taught at American College of Healthcare Sciences and Chemeketa Community College and completed a National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health postdoctoral research fellowship in the Department of Psychiatry at Oregon Health & Science University.

Dr. Fry has designed and taught a wide variety of nutrition and natural medicine classes online and has contributed to Behavioral Medicine curriculum design at University of Washington Medical School and educational content for Wiley Publishing. She is a certified Master Reviewer for Quality Matters and has led several review teams in the evaluation of online curriculum nationwide. She has a private practice focusing on Naturopathic Mental Health Care, [A Healthy State of Mind, LLC](#).

She received her B.Sc. in Nutritional Biochemistry from McGill University and a doctoral degree in Naturopathic Medicine, with additional certificates in Homeopathy and Shiatsu, from National College of Natural Medicine in Portland, Oregon.

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