

# Nutrition – Nature’s Way

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**Nutrition Month** is here and we all know that nutrition is essential to enjoying good health. Our bodies need a wide range of nutrients, proteins, and so on, in order for all body parts and functions to work well.

To give you an idea as to exactly what relies on your food choices take a look at the following:

An average adult body is comprised of 100 trillion cells, 206 bones, 600 muscles and 22 internal organs. Every square centimetre of our body has about 19 million skin cells. Every hour 1 billion cells must be replaced; and our heart beats about 2.5 billion times throughout our lifetime.

Pretty impressive aren't we! The "engine" of the human body is comprised of several "systems." These systems include circulatory, respiratory, immune, skeletal, urinary, excretory, digestive, endocrine, nervous, reproductive, and muscular. All of these systems rely on fuel in order to get maximum mileage and when the choice of fuel is processed foods, junk foods, etc., then these systems will not function at full capacity. If only one day you feed your body with junk food – you may not notice it – but you are harming one, or several of your systems. How you feel and what your body does is often a reaction to your choice of "fuel". The most common complaints are fatigue and diarrhea – both are often the results of bad "fuel" choices.

Eating more vegetables, fruits and whole grains is good, but what many nutrition awareness programs are not telling you is to be aware as to the sources of your food choices. Produce that must be transported long distances to get to your table are usually sprayed with fungicides and is irradiated; this means valuable enzymes are killed. We MUST have enzymes otherwise our digestive system is going to cause us some serious troubles. It's no wonder that the majority of households have items such as Pepto-Bismol or Tums in their bathroom cabinets.

You can make great food choices by eating local produce or organic or wild edibles!

### Weed of the Month Chickweed



Chickweed is a great wild edible to celebrate Nutrition Month with because it contains:

- Vitamins A, B1, B2, B3, B9, C, and D.
- Calcium, magnesium, iron, manganese, potassium, selenium, silica and zinc.

Chickweed contains saponins which aid in the permeability of cellular membranes; in other words, it increases the body's ability to absorb nutrients!

Be sure to try [Chickweed Salad](#) this summer!

## March is Kidney Month



**Chickweed**



**Yellow Dock**



Kidneys, we all have them and one of the many important jobs of the kidneys is to remove excess water from the body or to retain water when the body needs more. We have two kidneys although technically we can still function with one.

Normal kidneys make important chemical messengers called hormones. These hormones circulate in the bloodstream and regulate some body functions such as blood pressure, the making of red blood cells, and the uptake of calcium from the intestine.

Many of the substances in the blood and body fluid must be kept at the correct level for the body to function properly. When the kidneys are working properly, excess minerals, such as sodium and potassium, are excreted from the body in the urine. The kidneys also help to regulate the levels of other minerals, such as calcium and phosphate, which are important for the formation of bone.

Wastes, such as urea and creatinine, must also be removed from the body. Urea and other wastes are made when the body breaks down protein, such as meat. Creatinine is a waste product of the muscles. As kidney function decreases, the levels of urea and creatinine in the blood increase. Many waste products are toxic (poisonous) if they are not removed from the body fluids. For example, when certain drugs are taken, chemical wastes are produced which must be removed from the body by the kidneys.

### Kidney-Friendly Food and Wild Edibles

Eating kidney-friendly foods can help prevent kidney disease, kidney infections and kidney stones. These are foods rich in magnesium such as dark green vegetables, seeds, nuts, cranberries, legumes, whole grains, avocados and dried apricots. Also, eating foods with vitamin B6 are beneficial including: egg yolks, fish, whole grains, sweet potatoes, legumes, cauliflower and avocados.

Wild edibles can also help prevent your kidneys from infections, stones and disease. They include: stinging nettle, milk thistle, chickweed, goldenrod, horsetail, wild yam, slippery elm, astragalus, buchu, marshmallow, aloe and possibly yellow dock.

## Nutrition for Your Hair

Healthy hair does not happen from store-bought products that contain chemical products – you may get the “illusion” of having healthy hair, but an illusion is not real. If you truly want to have healthy hair, here are a couple of easy things to do!

Detox your hair! Eliminate the use of any store-bought hair care product that contains SLS or any chemicals. In fact, SLS (sodium lauryl sulfate) and SLES (sodium lauryl ether sulfate) are two evils when it comes to our health. We have been somewhat brainwashed into believing that if our shampoo, soaps or toothpastes do not foam up – they are not working. On the contrary, not having that sudsing action is actually healthy! Changing your belief system that shampoo must ‘luxuriously’ lather will be tough – but you truly will do your hair a favour!

Healthy hair is also achieved by eliminating or reducing damaging substances such as caffeine and alcohol.

Vitamin-rich food choices will help you achieve healthy hair. Look for foods that are particularly high in B vitamins, protein and vitamin E.

### Herbal Shampoo

- 2 tbsp. shampoo base or liquid castile soap
- 1 cup distilled water
- ¼ cup of fresh herbs or 3 tbsp. of dried herbs (see choices below)
- 1 tsp. apricot kernel oil or almond oil
- 2 drops essential oil of your choice

Place herbs in a Pyrex bowl. Boil water, then pour over the herbs. Let steep 20 minutes. Strain liquid from the herbs. Into the liquid add liquid castile soap or shampoo base; then the almond or apricot kernel oil; mix thoroughly. Scent with essential oil and mix again. Pour into refillable plastic container.

**Herbs for dry hair:** comfrey root, elder flowers, or orange blossoms. **Herbs for normal hair:** dandelion, horsetail, red clover. **Herbs for oily hair:** lemongrass, white willow bark, strawberry leaves, watercress.

**EVENT: FOOD MATTERS public screening.** *This eye opening documentary is to help raise nutrition awareness for Nutrition Month! March 25, 2012 at 1:30pm at the Newmarket Public Library in York Region. \$2.50 admission (to help cover the cost of the venue rental).*



Shampoo herbs steeping



Completed shampoo

**To celebrate Nutrition Month EdibleWildFood.com is launching the start of an exciting line of products!**

**ALSO**

**“FREE FOOD FROM FORAGING” will soon be available at Amazon. This e-book retails for only \$3.99 and is filled with information that will convert you into a “locovore” (one who eats local produce). Be sure to be watching for the announcement in your e-mail!**