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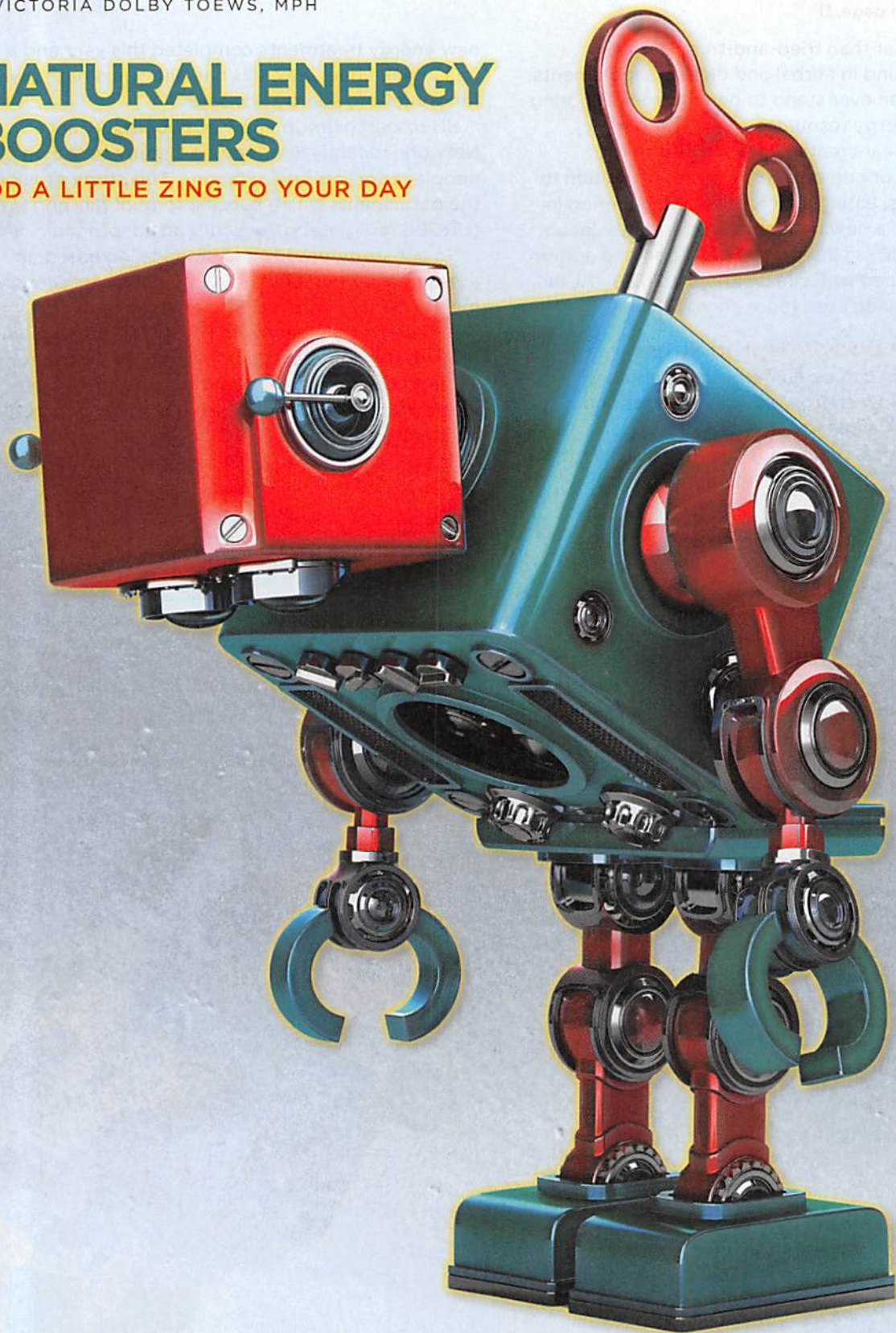
PRE + POST
WORKOUT TIPS

HERBAL HELPERS

BY VICTORIA DOLBY TOEWS, MPH

NATURAL ENERGY BOOSTERS

ADD A LITTLE ZING TO YOUR DAY



LOOKING TO TACKLE YOUR DREADED AFTERNOON SLUMP? SEEKING A SOURCE OF STAMINA THAT DOESN'T CRANK YOU UP AND THEN LEAVE YOU CRASHING?



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Look no further than tried-and-true natural energizers found in herbal and dietary supplements. More folks than ever stand to benefit from a shoring up of their energy resources.

“This past year created a perfect storm for aggravating our human energy crisis. In addition to massive stress, eating junk food while sheltering in place became a new national pastime,” says Jacob Teitelbaum, MD, an integrative physician and author of *From Fatigued to Fantastic* (Avery, 2021). “At this point, who couldn’t use more energy?”

Helping the Body Adapt to Stress

Although there can be numerous contributors to feelings of low energy, a biggie is stress and depleted adrenal glands.

“As a functional practitioner and herbalist, I often turn to a group of herbs called adaptogens to address this problem at the source,” says Patrick Fratellone, MD, an integrative physician in New York City and Connecticut and an adjunct professor at University of Bridgeport Naturopathic College of Medicine.

Over this past year, almost everyone experienced greater amounts of stress. “This stress increased our cortisol levels and in this way affected our energy, our sleep, our thinking, and our general well-being. Our stress response affects the endocrine system, immune system, and the central nervous system,” Dr. Fratellone explains.

This is where adaptogenic herbs step in: They recognize and respond to this problem. “These herbs help the body recover from stress while being safe to use,” he says.

If your energy levels recently took a nosedive, check with your healthcare provider to rule out a medical cause such as anemia, depression, or low thyroid hormone. But if you’re ready to seek a natural herbal boost, consider one of Dr. Fratellone’s most recommended adaptogenic herbs:

- Ashwagandha
- Siberian ginseng
- Schisandra
- Gotu kola

If their names are not familiar to you, keep in mind that adaptogens have a long history in Asian cultures of safe use as general tonics that promote overall wellness and vitality.

Following the Research

In addition to being a physician, Dr. Teitelbaum stays involved in research. “With three studies of

new energy treatments completed this year and a fourth one under way, this has been an amazing year for optimizing energy,” he says.

His research group, the Practitioners Alliance Network, recently wrapped up a study based on 200 people reporting severe fatigue. This study provided the participants with a specific form of ginseng (HRG80 red ginseng), which is an adaptogenic herb.

“In our study, energy and stamina increased an average of 47 percent and 45 percent, respectively; mental clarity improved 33 percent; and overall well-being, 46 percent with HRG80 (1 to 2 capsules or chewable tablets a day),” reports Dr. Teitelbaum. Ginseng can be a great starting point for anyone with mild to moderate fatigue. It’s his go-to herbal energy booster for busy workdays.

Boosting your energy with adaptogenic herbs can improve your daily life. Also keep in mind the importance of looking deeper to uncover the source of your stress and maintaining balance with a wholesome diet, enough sleep, and relaxation. 🌿🌿🌿



Victoria Dolby Toews, MPH, has been a health journalist for more than two decades. She is the author of *Life After Baby: Rediscovering and Reclaiming Your Healthy Pizzazz* (Basic Health Publications, 2012).

SELECTED SOURCES Personal communication: Patrick Fratellone, Jacob Teitelbaum

