

Overcome diabetes with these powerful therapeutic herbs

by Jonathan Benson, staff writer

(NaturalNews) If you or someone you know suffers from either diabetes or pre-diabetes, it might come as a surprise to learn that a life of endless insulin shots and blood glucose drugs is not your only treatment option. If you are serious about truly overcoming your diabetic condition, there are actually a number of all-natural herbal remedies available that possess proven curative benefits. Here are some of your best options:

1) **Ginseng**. Known for its ability to help modulate blood sugar levels, ginseng, and American ginseng in particular, is a powerful weapon in the fight against diabetes. A 2000 study out of the *University of Toronto*, for instance, found that a single three-gram dose of ginseng extract helps significantly reduce the blood sugar spike that typically occurs following a high-carbohydrate meal. Specifically for diabetics, taking ginseng either with or before a meal can help produce such results quickly and safely.

A follow-up study conducted in 2001 found that doses of ginseng even as low as one gram were still enough to provide virtually the same therapeutic benefits. Based on the results of the two studies, researchers recommended that diabetic patients take a minimum one-gram dose of ginseng 40 minutes prior to mealtime to normalize their blood sugar levels naturally. When combined with a healthy, low-carbohydrate and low-sugar diet, ginseng can even help some diabetics fully recover from their condition.

2) **Holy basil leaf**. Also known as tulsi, holy basil leaf has long been used throughout South Asia as a folk medicine. Today, it has been shown to be a powerful regulator of both blood sugar and blood lipid levels, and ultimately as an effective treatment for diabetes. According to a placebo-controlled study published in the *Journal of Clinical Pharmacy and Therapeutics*, holy basil leaf taken in moderate amounts can bring about a roughly 20 percent decrease in blood sugar levels.

According to *Mother Earth Living*, the traditional way to administer holy basil is in the form of steeped tea. If you have a tea ball or your own teabags, simply add one teaspoon of the dried leaves to one cup of water, and drink three cups of the brew daily. You can also purchase holy basil leaf in capsule or gelcap form as a dietary supplement if this is more convenient.

3) **Cinnamon**. Cinnamon is a much more medicinal spice than most people probably think it is, particularly as a treatment for erratic blood pressure levels and diabetes. Like ginseng, cinnamon helps to modulate blood sugar levels throughout the day, particularly in between meals when blood sugar levels tend to spike and drop, which is common for diabetics. As it turns out, cinnamon taken in therapeutic doses helps to lower fasting blood glucose levels and boost insulin response, effectively correcting the very symptoms associated with diabetes.

"Not only does cinnamon activate essential enzymes in the body, thus stimulating the receptors in the cells so they will respond more efficiently to insulin, but it also inhibits the enzymes responsible for deactivating ... causing insulin resistance," explains David W. Tanton in the book *Antidepressants, Antipsychotics, and Stimulants: Dangerous Drugs on Trial*.

4) **Bitter melon**. Another traditional folk remedy, bitter melon, or *Momordica charantia*, has long been utilized by ancient cultures as a treatment for diabetes and blood sugar issues. The cucumber-like fruit contains several powerful compounds that exhibit anti-diabetic activities, including charantin, a hypoglycemic agent that has actually been shown to be more effective, and far safer, than the diabetes drug tolbutamide (Tol-Tab).

"Momordica also contains an insulin-like polypeptide, polypeptide-P, which lowers blood sugar levels when injected subcutaneously into type 1 diabetic patients," explains the site *Holistic Online* about bitter melon. "The oral administration of 50-60 ml (milliliters) of the juice has shown good results in clinical trials."

5) **Garlic and onions**. Interestingly enough, garlic and onions are both powerful blood sugar-lowering foods as well. These two common foods contain disease-fighting, sulfur-containing nutrients such as allyl propyl disulphide (APDS) and diallyl disulphide oxide (allicin) that help lower blood glucose levels and increase the amount of free insulin in the body.

Both intravenously and orally, onion extract has been shown scientifically not only to improve the metabolism of carbohydrates in the liver, but also to correct the improper release and use of insulin in the liver and elsewhere throughout the body. Similarly, garlic, which is also a member of the onion family, helps to normalize blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and reduce blood glucose levels without causing harmful side effects.

"OPE (onion peel extract) might improve glucose response and insulin resistance associated with type 2 diabetes by alleviating metabolic dysregulation of free fatty acids, suppressing oxidative stress, up-regulating glucose uptake at peripheral tissues, and/or down-regulating inflammatory gene expression in liver," concluded a 2011 study on onions published in the journal *Nutrition & Metabolism*.