

## **The Reproductive System - Part 1**

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### **What Does the Reproductive System Consist of?**

The reproductive system is differentiated between male and female.

The female reproductive system contains three main parts: the vagina, which leads from the vulva, the vaginal opening, to the uterus; the uterus, which holds the developing fetus; and the ovaries, which produce the female's ova.

The major reproductive organs of the male can be grouped into three categories. The first category is sperm production and storage. Production takes place in the testes which are housed in the temperature regulating scrotum, immature sperm then travel to the epididymis for development and storage. The second category are the ejaculatory fluid producing glands which include the seminal vesicles, prostate, and the vas deferens. The final category are those used for copulation, and deposition of the spermatozoa (sperm) within the male, these include the penis, urethra, vas deferens, and Cowper's gland.

### **What is the Function of the Reproductive System?**

The female reproductive system has two functions. The first is to produce egg cells, and the second is to protect and nourish the offspring until birth.

The male reproductive system has one function, to produce and deposit sperm.

### **Common Acute and Chronic Problems for Reproductive System:**

#### *Female:*

Pelvic inflammatory disease	Premenstrual syndrome
Dysmenorrhea	Menstrual cramping
Amenorrhea	Uterine fibroids
Endometriosis	Menorrhagia
Vaginal dryness	Menopause
Fibrocystic disease	PCOS
Sexually transmitted disease	Cancer: ovarian, breast, cervical
Miscarriage	Incompetent cervix
Prolapsed uterus	Yeast infections
Vaginal dryness	Cervical dysplasia

#### *Male:*

Prostatitis	Cancer: prostate, penis, testicular
Benign Prostatic Hypertrophy	Andropause
Infertility	Low sperm count
Circumcision	Herpes

Premature ejaculation  
 Impotence  
 Incontinence  
 Orchitis

Sexually transmitted infections  
 Urinary tract infection  
 Epididymitis

### **Herbal Applications for the Reproductive System:**

Extracts	Sitz baths
Compresses	Teas
Salves	Oils
Stems	Soaks
Capsules	

### **Herbs for the Reproductive System:**

#### ***For the Male Reproductive System***

##### *Tonics*

Angelica (*Angelica archangelica*)  
 Chasteberry (*Vitex agnes-castus*)  
 Damiana (*Turnera diffusa*)  
 Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*)  
 Maitake (*Grifola frondosa*)  
 Milky Oats (*Avena sativa*)  
 Nettles (*Urtica dioica*)  
 Raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*)  
 Reishi (*Ganoderma spp.*)  
 Sarsaparilla (*Smilax spp.*)  
 Saw Palmetto (*Serenoa serrulata*)  
 Turkey Tail (*Trametes versicolor*)

##### *Prostate Health*

Damiana (*Turnera diffusa*)  
 Nettle Root (*Urtica dioica*)  
 Saw Palmetto (*Serenoa serrulata*)  
 Wild Yam (*Dioscorea villosa*)\*\*

#### ***Herbs for Men and Women***

##### *Aphrodisiacs*

Angelica (*Angelica archangelica*)  
 Saw Palmetto (*Serenoa serrulata*)

#### ***For the Female Reproductive System***

##### *Tonics*

Angelica (*Angelica archangelica*)  
 Black Cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*)\*\*  
 Blue Cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*)\*\*  
 Burdock (*Arctium lappa*)  
 Chasteberry (*Vitex agnes-castus*)  
 False Unicorn Root (*Chamaelirium luteum*)\*\*  
 Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*)\*\*  
 Maitake (*Grifola frondosa*)  
 Milky Oats (*Avena sativa*)  
 Motherwort (*Leonurus cardiaca*)  
 Nettles (*Urtica dioica*)  
 Raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*)  
 Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*)  
 Reishi (*Ganoderma spp.*)  
 Turkey Tail (*Trametes versicolor*)

##### *Antispasmodics*

Crampbark (*Viburnum opulus*)  
 Wild Yam (*Dioscorea villosa*)\*\*

Damiana (*Turnera diffusa*)  
 Vanilla (*Vanilla planifolia*)

*General Tonics for Reproductive Health*

Angelica (*Angelica archangelica*)  
 Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*)  
 Milky Oats (*Avena sativa*)  
 Raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*)  
 Turkey Tail (*Trametes versicolor*)

Chasteberry (*Vitex agnes-castus*)  
 Maitake (*Grifola frondosa*)  
 Nettles (*Urtica dioica*)  
 Reishi (*Ganoderma spp.*)

*Nervines*

Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*)  
 Chamomile (*Matricaria chamomila*)  
 Linden (*Tilia spp.*)  
 Nettles (*Urtica dioica*)  
 Passionflower (*Passiflora spp.*)  
 Skullcap (*Scutellaria lateriflora*)  
 Vervain (*Verbena hastata*)

Catnip (*Nepeta cataria*)  
 Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*)  
 Motherwort (*Leonurus cardiaca*)  
 Oat (*Avena sativa*)  
 St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)  
 Tulsi (*Ocimum tenuiflorum*)

*Cardiotonics*

Astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*)  
 Hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.*)  
 Motherwort (*Leonuris cardiaca*)

Garlic (*Allium sativa*)  
 Linden (*Tilia spp.*)

\*\*Endangered species. Use cultivated herbs only.

**Ways to Maintain Reproductive System Health:**

- ~ Express emotions and feelings
- ~ General life considerations: plenty of sleep, good food, exercise, fresh air, eliminate stress
- ~ Keep electronic devices away from the waistline
- ~ Avoid plastics for food storage and cooking
- ~ Consume foods high in water soluble fiber, low sugar, high in magnesium and calcium, vitamin A, B's, E, essential fatty acids
- ~ Wear loose and natural fiber underwear

**Recommended Herbal Books (\*indicates available through library loan system):***General Body System Information*

- ~ The Gift of Healing Herbs : Plant Medicines and Home Remedies for a Vibrantly Healthy Life by Robin Rose Bennett\*
- ~ The Herbal Handbook: A User's Guide to Medical Herbalism by David Hoffmann
- ~ Herbal Medicine From the Heart of the Earth by Sharon Tilgner, N.D.
- ~ The Authentic Herbal Healer by Holly Bellebuono
- ~ Holistic Anatomy by Pip Waller
- ~The Encyclopedia of Medicinal Plants by Andrew Chevallier\*

- ~The Complete Medicinal Herbal by Penelope Ody\*
- ~The Holistic Herbal by David Hoffmann\*
- ~ Medical Herbalism by David Hoffmann

### *Reproductive System Specific*

- ~ Rogers' School of Herbal Medicine Volume 8 - The Reproductive System by Robert Dale Rogers
- ~ Down There: Sexual and Reproductive Health The Wise Woman Way by Susun Weed
- ~ The Sexual Herbal: Prescriptions for Enhancing Love and Passion by Brigitte Mars
- ~ Vital Man: Natural Health Care for Men at Midlife by Stephen Harrod Buhner\*
- ~The Male Herbal by James Green\*
- ~ Natural Remedies for Low Testosterone: How to Enhance Male Sexual Health and Energy by Stephen Harrod Buhner (Comes out January 23, 2016)
- ~Traversing the Wild Terrain of Menopause: Herbal Allies for Midlife Women and Men by Gail Faith Edwards
- ~Herbal Healing for Women by Rosemary Gladstar
- ~Breast Cancer? Breast Health! The Wise Woman Way by Susun Weed\*
- ~Menopausal Years the Wise Woman Way by Susun Weed\*
- ~ Wise Woman Herbal for Childbearing Year by Susun Weed\*
- ~ The Herbal Menopause Book by Amanda McQuade Crawford\*
- ~ Botanical Medicine for Women's Health by Aviva Romm
- ~ Women's Health in Complementary and Integrative Medicine by Tieraona Low Dog
- ~ Integrative Women's Health by Tieraona Low Dog\*
- ~ Integrative Men's Health by George E. Munoz\*

### **Online Resources**

#### *Women's health:*

Sharol Tilgner: <http://herbaltransitions.com/Newsletters%20and%20other%20goodies/Women's%20Herbal%20Ezine.pdf>  
 Gail Faith Edwards: <http://blessedmaineherbs.com/womensherbs.html>  
 Susun Weed has a wealth of articles on her website regarding Women's Health: [http://www.susunweed.com/Articles\\_Susun\\_Weed.htm](http://www.susunweed.com/Articles_Susun_Weed.htm)

#### *Men's health:*

7song: <http://7song.com/files/Male%20Health-An%20Herbalist's%20View.pdf>  
 Frank Cook: <http://www.plantsandhealers.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/maleherbalhealthfrankcook2006.pdf>  
 Gail Faith Edwards: <http://www.blessedmaineherbs.com/malemenopause.html?mid=514>  
 Ryan Drum: <http://www.ryandrum.com/menshealth.html>  
 Several articles by David Hoffmann: [http://www.healthy.net/Wellness\\_Center/Healthy\\_Man\\_Center/5](http://www.healthy.net/Wellness_Center/Healthy_Man_Center/5)