

# A guide to *Natural Standard*

## What is Natural Standard?

Natural Standard is a set of databases that contain evidence-based, peer reviewed information about complimentary and alternative therapies. The materials presented are compiled by clinicians and researchers.

## What can I do with it?

You can use Natural Standard to find information on generic herbs and supplements, the ingredients of brand name supplements, various complementary and alternative therapies and their comparative effectiveness for specific conditions, information about the conditions themselves, and environmental health topics. There are also Interactive Tools including a dictionary, an interaction checker, a symptom checker, a nutrition database and various calculators.

## How do I get to it?

To get to Natural Standard:

- 1) Go to [www.shirp.ca](http://www.shirp.ca)
- 2) Click on the "Search for articles on your topic" link under the heading "Find an Article"
- 3) Scroll down the page until you see "Natural Standard" in the alphabetical list
- 4) Click on the heading above the description
- 5) If you are accessing this database from outside a health region facility, you may be asked to log in if you have not done so already.



The main page for Natural Standard is pictured below. You can go into each resource separately, using the menu towards the top of the page, or you can use the search box in the top right corner of the page to search for keywords.

The main menu includes:

**Databases** lists the 9 databases available through Natural Standard: *Foods, Herbs & Supplements, Health & Wellness, Comparative Effectiveness, Charts & Tables, Brand Names, Medical Conditions, Sports Medicine, Genomics & Proteomics, and Environment & Global Health*

**Checkers** lists tools that allow you to look up drug/supplement interactions as well as nutrient depletions associated with specific drugs or natural products

**Tools** includes a variety of calculators, a dictionary, patient handouts, and more.

**Continuing education** lists CE units created by Natural Standard. Please check with your professional association to see if these units are eligible for CE credit.

**News & Events** provides links to the Natural standard e-newsletter, RSS feeds, list of events, podcasts, and more.

This guide looks at using the search box, the Databases and the Checkers.

**Natural Standard**  
The Authority on Integrative Medicine

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Search

Login | Logout

Website last updated on 11/09/2010

About Us | **Databases** | Checkers | Tools | Continuing Education | News & Events

**Natural Standard** was founded by healthcare providers and researchers to provide high-quality, evidence-based information about complementary and alternative therapies. Grades reflect the level of available scientific data for or against the use of each therapy for a specific medical condition. [More >](#)

Grading System	
<b>A</b>	Strong Positive Scientific Evidence
<b>B</b>	Positive Scientific Evidence
<b>C</b>	Unclear Scientific Evidence
<b>D</b>	Negative Scientific Evidence
<b>F</b>	Strong Negative Scientific Evidence

**Testimonials**

"Natural Standard provides a critical and transparent review of the evidence regarding herbs and supplements. As such, it is an extremely valuable resource for both clinicians and investigators."

David Eisenberg, MD  
Director, Osher Institute  
Division for Research and Education in  
Complementary & Integrative Medicine  
Harvard Medical School

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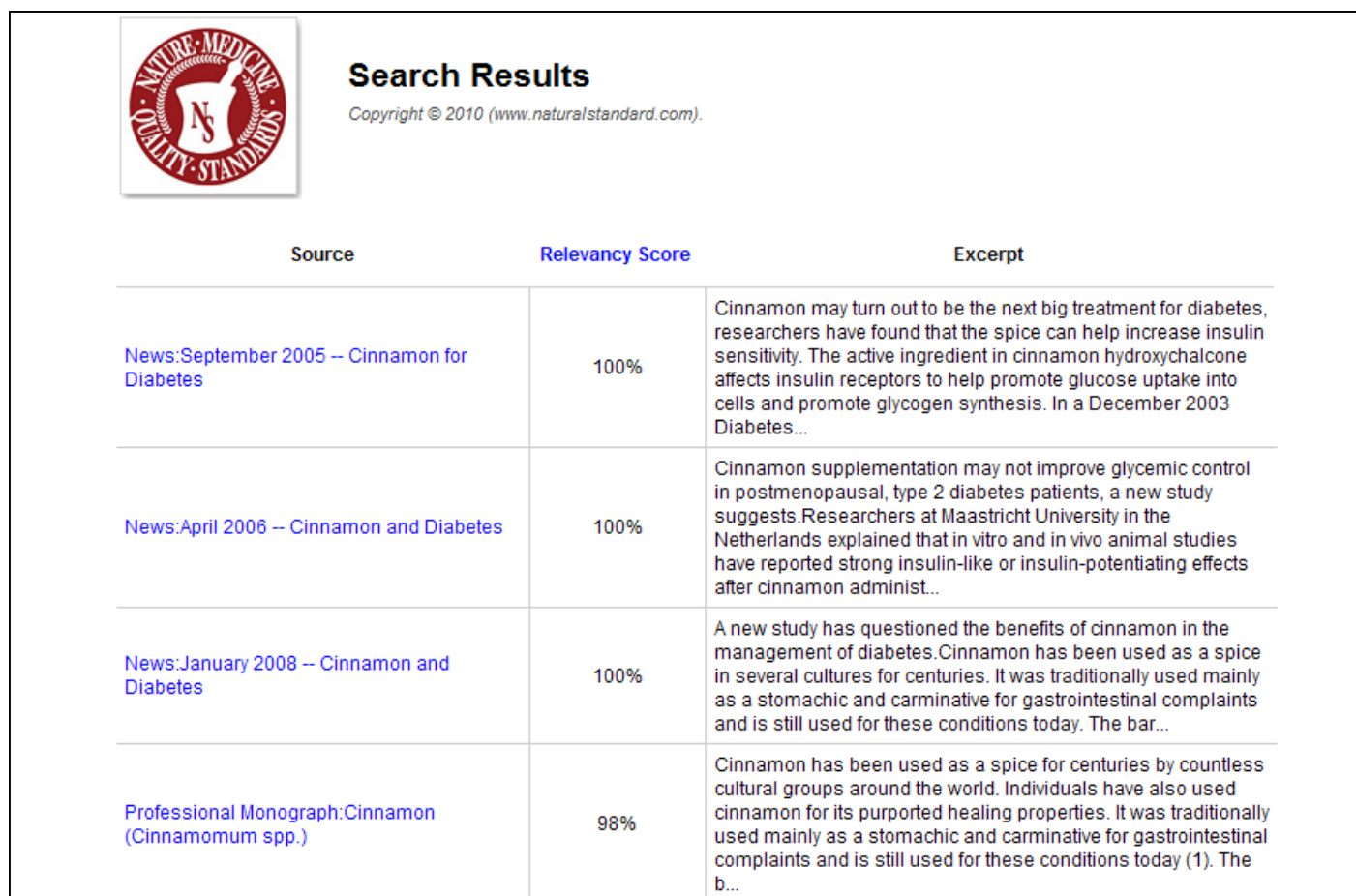
## Using the Search box

Type the term, or terms, that you are looking for into the search box.

Important Note: if you are looking for more than one term, use AND to tell the computer to search for both words in the same document. For example, cinnamon AND diabetes. At present, you will not get the same results if you do the search without the AND.



Your results will indicate the type of resource, the relevancy score for the terms you typed in, and an excerpt for each item that is listed. They are presented in order of relevancy (i.e. how well the computer believes the item fits your topic). Click on the link to access the item.



Source	Relevancy Score	Excerpt
<a href="#">News:September 2005 -- Cinnamon for Diabetes</a>	100%	Cinnamon may turn out to be the next big treatment for diabetes, researchers have found that the spice can help increase insulin sensitivity. The active ingredient in cinnamon hydroxycalcone affects insulin receptors to help promote glucose uptake into cells and promote glycogen synthesis. In a December 2003 Diabetes...
<a href="#">News:April 2006 -- Cinnamon and Diabetes</a>	100%	Cinnamon supplementation may not improve glycemic control in postmenopausal, type 2 diabetes patients, a new study suggests.Researchers at Maastricht University in the Netherlands explained that in vitro and in vivo animal studies have reported strong insulin-like or insulin-potentiating effects after cinnamon administ...
<a href="#">News:January 2008 -- Cinnamon and Diabetes</a>	100%	A new study has questioned the benefits of cinnamon in the management of diabetes.Cinnamon has been used as a spice in several cultures for centuries. It was traditionally used mainly as a stomachic and carminative for gastrointestinal complaints and is still used for these conditions today. The bar...
<a href="#">Professional Monograph:Cinnamon (Cinnamomum spp.)</a>	98%	Cinnamon has been used as a spice for centuries by countless cultural groups around the world. Individuals have also used cinnamon for its purported healing properties. It was traditionally used mainly as a stomachic and carminative for gastrointestinal complaints and is still used for these conditions today (1). The b...

## Databases

The databases each feature alphabetical lists of topics. Browse through the lists to find the topic you are interested in, then click on the link.

There are three formats for information in the databases:


1. Professional Monograph. This is a detailed report intended for health professionals.
2. Bottom Line Monograph. This is a condensed version that can also be given to patients
3. Flashcard summary.

A reference list, and related News items are often also available.

As you go through the report, you will notice boxes that list the scientific evidence supporting the use of an herb for specific conditions. The evidence is graded using the following scale:

- A (Strong Scientific Evidence)
- B (Good Scientific Evidence)
- C (Unclear or conflicting scientific evidence)
- D (Fair Negative Scientific Evidence)
- F (Strong Negative Scientific Evidence)

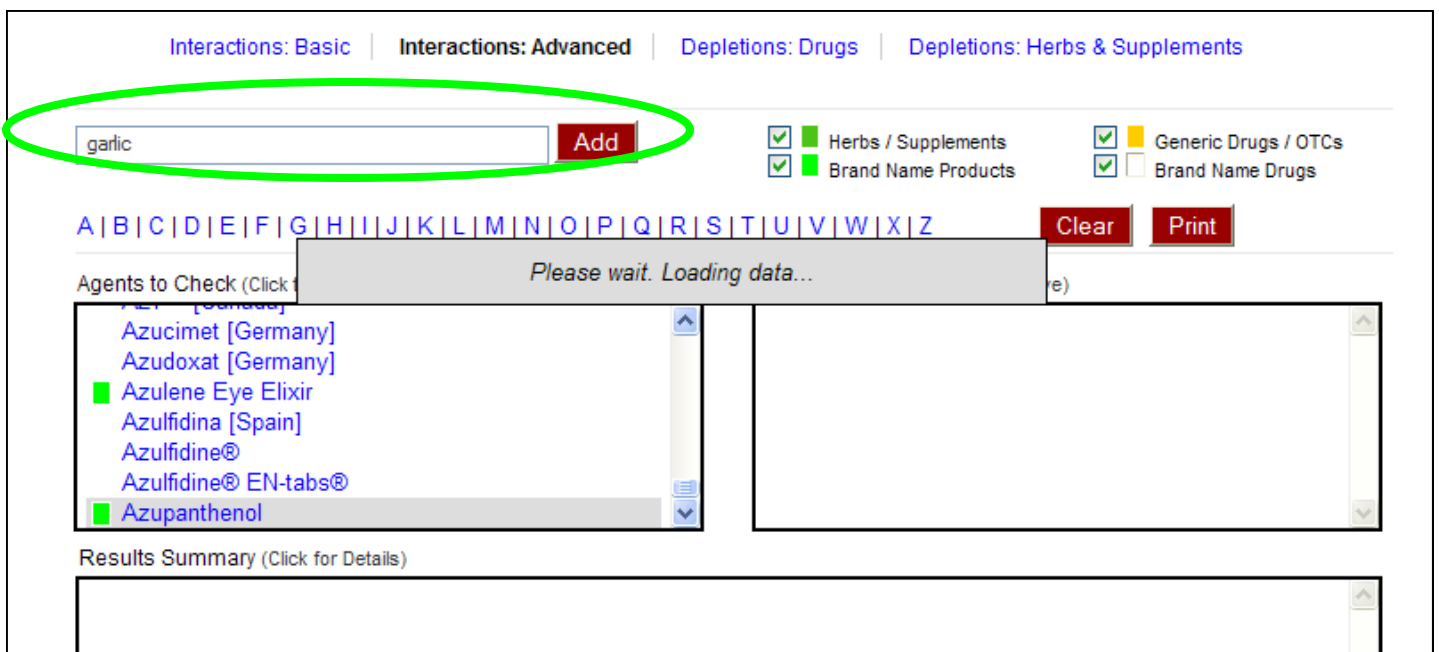
Scientific Evidence for Common/Studied Uses:

Indication	Evidence Grade	
<a href="#">Earache (associated with acute otitis media)</a>	<a href="#">C</a>	<b>GRADING SYSTEM LINK</b>

## Checkers

### Interactions Checker

Use the search box at the top or scroll through the list to find the substance you are interested in.



Interactions: Basic | Interactions: Advanced | Depletions: Drugs | Depletions: Herbs & Supplements

garlic

Herbs / Supplements  Generic Drugs / OTCs  
 Brand Name Products  Brand Name Drugs

A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Z

Agents to Check (Click for Details) *Please wait. Loading data...*

- [Azucimet \[Germany\]](#)
- [Azudoxat \[Germany\]](#)
- [Azulene Eye Elixir](#)
- [Azulfidina \[Spain\]](#)
- [Azulfidine®](#)
- [Azulfidine® EN-tabs®](#)
- [Azupanthanol](#)

Results Summary (Click for Details)

Click on the item you want from the “Agents to Check” box

Interactions: Basic | Interactions: Advanced | Depletions: Drugs | Depletions: Herbs & Supplements

garlic

Herbs / Supplements  Generic Drugs / OTCs  
 Brand Name Products  Brand Name Drugs

A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z

Agents to Check (Click to Add)

- Garlic
- Cardio
- Garlic & Parsley Oil
- Garlic 1:1
- Garlic 1000mg - Odorless
- Garlic 1200 mg Odor-Free Tablets
- Garlic 2500mg Odorless Softgels
- Cardio 5,000mg

Selected Agents (Click to Remove)

Results Summary (Click for Details)

The “Results” box will indicate whether there are any interactions found. Click on the link to bring up the interaction information.

Garlic 1000mg - Odorless  
Garlic 1200 mg Odor-Free Tablets  
Garlic 2500mg Odorless Softgels  
Cardio 5,000mg

Results Summary (Click for Details)

**Interactions found!**

Click on any interaction below for more information.

- Garlic + Lab interactions (+)
- Garlic allergy information

**DISCLAIMER:** Currently this does not check for drug drug interactions. This is not an all-inclusive comprehensive list of potential interactions and is for informational purposes only. Not all interactions are known or well reported in the scientific literature, and new interactions are continually being reported. Input is needed from a qualified healthcare provider including a pharmacist before starting any therapy. Application of clinical judgement is necessary.

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Use the scroll bars to scroll down, or click on the print button to print the information.

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**Garlic + Lab interactions (4)**

**Garlic + Prothrombin Time/INR (International Normalized Ratio)**  
There is a report of two cases, with limited clinical information provided, of an increase in a previously stabilized internationalized ratio (INR) with concomitant garlic and warfarin use, which has been subsequently debated due to limited clinical information ( 160; 151). However, in a small controlled study, no significant change in international Normalized Ratio (INR) values was found in a group of patients stabilized on warfarin (Coumadin®) therapy (INR target 2-3) who were started on 1200mg of aged garlic extract (AGE) for two months, compared to a placebo group (clinical outcomes such as increased bleeding were not assessed, and the study was likely too small and brief to significantly measure such outcomes) ( 161).

**Garlic + Serum Glucose**  
The available evidence suggests that garlic does not significantly lower blood glucose levels in humans. Although animal studies have reported that garlic may decrease glucose concentrations and increase insulin secretion ( 145; 146), multiple human trials have failed to demonstrate significant effects of oral garlic preparations on measures of glycemic control in diabetic or non-diabetic patients ( 112; 56; 116; 121; 122; 123; 141; 128; 130; 28), with the exception of one poor-quality study that noted a small significant reduction in mean blood glucose levels in patients treated with 800mg of daily dehydrated garlic (Kwai®), from 89mg/dL to 79mg/dL over 4 weeks ( 126).

**Garlic + Serum Lipid Profile**  
Multiple trials have demonstrated modest lipid-lowering properties of oral garlic supplementation, including decreases in total cholesterol, low-density lipoprotein (LDL), and triglycerides ( 1; 2; 4; 5; 3). Results have been inconsistent regarding effects of garlic on levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL), although a meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials did not demonstrate a statistically significant effect when data were pooled ( 1).

**Garlic + Urine Allylmercapturic Acid**  
Garlic tablets and fresh garlic can result in urinary excretion of allylmercapturic acid (N-acetyl-S-allyl

## Depletions Checker

Choose a substance from the alphabetical list.

Interactions: Basic | Interactions: Advanced | Depletions: Drugs | Depletions: Herbs & Supplements

A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z

**A**

- Anesthetics
- Angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors
- Antibiotics
- Anticholinergics
- Anticonvulsants**
- Antidiabetics
- Antidotes
- Antifungals
- Antigout Agents
- Antihypertensives
- Anti-inflammatories

Please select a drug or drug category at left.

A list of depletions for that particular drug will then appear in this space.

**DISCLAIMER:** This interactive tool is for informational purposes only and is not an all-inclusive list. Drug-drug interactions are not currently part of this feature. Not all interactions are known or well reported in the scientific literature, and new interactions are continually being reported. Input is needed from a qualified healthcare provider including a pharmacist before starting any therapy. Application of clinical judgment is necessary.

A list of depletions will show up on the right. Click on the nutrient for more information.

A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z

**A**

- Anesthetics
- Angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitors
- Antibiotics
- Anticholinergics
- Anticonvulsants
- Antidiabetics
- Antidotes
- Antifungals
- Antigout Agents
- Antihypertensives
- Anti-inflammatories
- Antilipemics
- Antimalarials
- Antineoplastics
- Antiobesity Agents
- Antiparkinson Agents
- Antiprotozoals
- Antipsychotics
- Antivirals

**Depletions: Anticonvulsants**

Click any agent below to view more information on that interaction.

**Anticonvulsants/Nutrient Depletion:**

- Biotin
- Calcium
- Carnitine
- Copper
- **Folate**
- Niacin/Niacinamide
- Phosphorus
- Riboflavin
- Selenium
- Thiamin
- Vitamin B6/pyrodoxine
- Vitamin B12
- Vitamin D/calciferol
- Vitamin E
- Vitamin K
- Zinc

Interactions: Basic | Interactions: Advanced | **Depletions: Drugs** | Depletions: Herbs & Supplements

A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z

**A**

- Anesthetics
- Angiotensin converting enzyme
- Antibiotics
- Anticholinergics
- Anticonvulsants
- Antidiabetics
- Antidotes
- Antifungals
- Antigout Agents
- Antihypertensives
- Anti-inflammatories
- Antilipemics
- Antimalarials
- Antineoplastics
- Antiobesity Agents
- Antiparkinson Agents

**Folate:** Evidence from human trials indicate that carbamazepine (Tegretol®) may reduce serum folate levels, but megaloblastic anemia has not been reported (1548649). Phenobarbital (Luminal®) and primidone (Mysoline®) may reduce serum folate levels, occasionally leading to megaloblastic anemia (usually in people with low dietary folate intake), and possibly contributing to neurological side effects, mental changes, and cerebral atrophy. Based on human and animal evidence, pregnant women taking carbamazepine, phenobarbital, or primidone may be especially at risk from reduced folate levels (1548649, 3606631).

**Depletions: Anticonvulsants**

Click any agent below to view more information on that interaction.

**Anticonvulsants/Nutrient Depletion:**

- Phosphorus
- Riboflavin
- Selenium
- Thiamin
- Vitamin B6/pyrodoxine
- Vitamin B12