

PRIME ORGANICS HONEY

FREE GUIDE

The Honest Shelf

What actually works for men's energy, and what you can stop buying

A field guide for the man who is already doing everything right

Eight ingredients rated honestly. How to read a label and a lab report. The bloodwork to ask for. A 30 day protocol you can actually follow.

What this guide is, and what it is not

This is a buyer's guide written by a brand that sells one of the things in it. You should read it with that in mind, and we have tried to write it so that doing so does not change your conclusions.

Most supplement guides exist to make one product look inevitable. This one rates eight ingredients and tells you that the best evidence on the list belongs to creatine, which we do not sell. It tells you that our own category is food rather than pharmacology, and that it works on the day you take it rather than over a quarter.

We wrote it this way because the men we hear from have already been sold to. They have a drawer of half-finished bottles and a working suspicion that most of it was marketing. A guide that pretended otherwise would go in the same drawer.

How to use it. Read the foundations chapter before you buy anything. Then use the shelf ratings to cut your list down, the label and lab chapters to avoid the obvious traps, and the 30 day protocol to find out what actually does something for you specifically.

This guide is educational and is not medical advice. It does not diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. Nothing here has been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. Supplements interact with medication and with existing conditions. Talk to a doctor before you start anything in this book, and go sooner rather than later if your energy has dropped suddenly or sharply.

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The 7pm problem

You train. You sleep something close to enough. You eat better than most men you know. And the tank is still empty by the time you walk through the door.

That sentence, in one form or another, is the most repeated thing men write when they go looking for help with this. One man in his late thirties put it plainly on a forum: he got decent sleep, he got sunlight, he exercised, he was doing all the things, and he still had every symptom he had read about.

What follows that post is always the same. Twenty replies naming twenty different bottles. Almost none of them ask what he had already ruled out, and almost none of them mention that half of what they are recommending has never been tested in a human being at the dose on the label.

So he buys four of them. Two months later he cannot tell you whether any of it did anything, because he started them in the same week and never wrote anything down. That is the actual failure mode, and it is not a knowledge problem. It is a method problem.

The claim this guide makes. You can get a real answer about your own energy in about thirty days, for less money than the drawer of bottles cost you, if you change one thing at a time and write it down.

Five things that beat any supplement

Do these first. If you do not, you will spend the next year testing bottles against a problem they were never going to solve.

1 Sleep timing beats sleep length

Seven hours on a consistent schedule beats eight and a half that moves around by two hours. Your energy system runs on a clock, and the clock cares more about when than how much. Pick a wake time you can hold on a Saturday and hold it.

2 Light in the first hour

Ten minutes of outdoor light within an hour of waking does more for afternoon energy than most of what is in this book. It is free, it is not a supplement, and it is the single most skipped item on this list.

3 Protein at breakfast, not just at dinner

Most men eat almost no protein until the evening. Forty grams in the morning flattens the mid-afternoon drop more reliably than an extra coffee does.

4 Training load, not training amount

If you are tired all the time and you train hard six days a week, the training is a candidate. Fatigue that improves on a deload week was never a supplement problem.

5 Alcohol is the one nobody wants on the list

Two drinks measurably degrades the deep sleep you were relying on to recover. You do not have to stop. You do have to stop blaming the supplement that is competing with it.

The shelf, rated

Eight ingredients, one page each. Every page says what the research actually covers, what men report in practice, and who should not bother.

The verdicts are deliberately blunt because a rating scale that never says skip is a catalogue. Here is how to read them.

VERDICT	MEANS
WORTH IT	Real evidence, real reports, and cheap enough that trying it is low risk.
SITUATIONAL	Works for a specific man with a specific problem. Not a default.
THIN	Popular, plausible, and under-evidenced. Buy with your eyes open.
SKIP	The risk, the cost or the absence of human data does not justify it today.

Before you read on. The three rated **worth it** are Ashwagandha, Boron, Magnesium, Creatine. We sell none of them. If you only act on one page of this guide, make it that one.

Ashwagandha

Withania somnifera

WORTH IT

The most defensible thing on the shelf, if what you actually have is a stress and sleep problem.

What it is

A root used in Ayurvedic practice, sold mostly as a standardised extract such as KSM-66 or Sensoril.

What the research actually covers

This is one of the better studied items on the shelf. Trials have looked at stress markers, sleep quality and exercise performance, mostly at 300 to 600mg a day of a standardised extract over eight to twelve weeks.

What men report

Men report it as the one that takes the edge off rather than the one that lifts them up. A recurring complaint is emotional flatness after several months, and a recurring fix is cycling off for a few weeks.

Who should not bother

Men who read 'adaptogen' and expect stimulation. It does the opposite.

Tongkat Ali

Eurycoma longifolia

SITUATIONAL

Real effects for some men, a genuine fog problem for others. Start far lower than the label says.

What it is

A root extract, usually sold at a 1:200 concentration or as a percentage-standardised eurycomanone.

What the research actually covers

Small human trials on fatigue, mood and hormonal markers. Sample sizes are modest and the quality of the extract varies enormously between sellers, which makes results hard to compare.

What men report

The most polarising item in the entire pull. It is many men's favourite, and it is also the single most common cause of a brain fog complaint thread. The pattern people describe is good days followed by a foggy day, often after a dose that was too high.

Who should not bother

Anyone who wants a predictable daily. This one is a coin flip and the downside is a wasted day.

Shilajit

purified mineral pitch

THIN

Buy it for the minerals and the ritual if you like it. Do not buy it expecting a documented outcome.

What it is

A resin that seeps from rock in high mountain ranges, sold as resin, powder, capsules or gummies. Fulvic acid content is the usual quality marker.

What the research actually covers

Thin on human outcomes. There is compositional work and there are small studies, but nothing that would let an honest person promise you a result.

What men report

Two conversations run in parallel. One is men reporting a steady lift. The other, much larger, is men teaching each other to read heavy metal panels, because unpurified shilajit genuinely can carry lead and arsenic. The purity conversation is more mature than the efficacy conversation.

Who should not bother

Anyone buying an unpurified resin without a third party heavy metal panel. That is a real risk, not a marketing point.

Boron

WORTH IT

Costs almost nothing and is one of the few where men report a fast, obvious change.

What it is

A trace mineral, usually sold as boron citrate or glycinate at 3 to 10mg.

What the research actually covers

Small studies on hormone binding and mineral metabolism. Cheap, well tolerated, and the mechanism proposed is at least specific rather than hand-waving.

What men report

Punches above its price. Recurring posts from men in their late thirties describing a noticeable difference within a week, which is faster than most of this list.

Who should not bother

Nobody in particular, but do not exceed the label. More is not better with trace minerals.

Zinc

SITUATIONAL

Excellent if you are low. Close to pointless if you are not. Test, do not guess.

What it is

An essential mineral. Deficiency is real and measurable.

What the research actually covers

Solid, but the finding people misquote. Correcting a deficiency helps. Supplementing on top of an adequate intake does not do much.

What men report

Everyone takes it. Almost nobody has tested whether they were low to begin with.

Who should not bother

Men taking high doses long term without testing. Chronic high zinc drives copper down.

Magnesium

glycinate, malate, threonate

WORTH IT

If you only add one thing to your night, add this. Oxide is the cheap form and it mostly passes through you.

What it is

An essential mineral most men eat too little of. The form matters more than the dose.

What the research actually covers

Well established for sleep quality and muscle function. Glycinate is the form most people tolerate at night without stomach trouble.

What men report

Boring and reliable, which is why it rarely gets its own thread. It works on sleep, and sleep is where most energy complaints actually live.

Who should not bother

Anyone with kidney issues without a doctor's sign-off.

Creatine

monohydrate

WORTH IT

The highest evidence to price ratio on this entire list. If you are not taking it, start here.

What it is

The most studied sports supplement in existence. 3 to 5g a day, no loading needed.

What the research actually covers

Overwhelming. Strength, power output, and a growing body of work on cognitive performance under sleep deprivation, which is the part relevant to this book.

What men report

Repeatedly named by men who tried everything else and found this was the one that actually did something they could measure.

Who should not bother

Nobody healthy. The kidney scare has been tested repeatedly and has not held up in healthy adults.

Maca, Fadogia, Cistanche

the long tail

SKIP

Fadogia especially. There is no human safety data worth the risk for a benefit nobody has demonstrated.

What it is

Three separate botanicals that end up in the same bucket: heavily marketed, lightly evidenced.

What the research actually covers

Maca has some human work on subjective wellbeing. Fadogia has essentially no human safety data and some animal signals that should give you pause. Cistanche is early.

What men report

These are the ingredients men name when they list what they wasted money on. Fadogia in particular gets pushed hard by people who have not read the animal toxicity work.

Who should not bother

Everyone, for now. Revisit if real human trials appear.

How to read a label

Five rules. The first one alone will save you more money than the rest of this guide.

Proprietary blend means you are not allowed to know

If the label says 'Proprietary Blend 1,200mg' and then lists eight things, you know the total and nothing else. The cheap ingredient is usually most of it. This is the single most useful thing to learn about labels.

Order is dose order

Ingredients are listed by weight, most first. If the active you are buying it for appears last, you are buying a sprinkle of it.

Compare the serving, not the bottle

A bottle with twice the capsules at half the dose is not a better deal. Convert everything to cost per effective serving before you compare.

Standardisation is the number that matters

'500mg tongkat ali' tells you almost nothing. '500mg standardised to 2% eurycomanone' tells you what you are actually getting. A seller who will not state standardisation is telling you something.

A study on the ingredient is not a study on the product

This is the trick used most often and it is used by nearly everybody, including brands you like. A trial on an ingredient at a dose you are not taking is not evidence about the thing in your hand.

How to read a lab report

Men online taught each other this because sellers would not. It is the most useful literacy in the category.

Ask for it in writing

A certificate of analysis is a lab report on a specific batch. A seller who has one will send it. A seller who talks about 'rigorous testing' without producing a document does not have one.

Check that it names the batch

A COA with no lot number is decoration. It should tie to the batch you are holding.

Heavy metals is the section that matters

Lead, arsenic, cadmium and mercury. For anything mined, grown in soil, or harvested from rock, this is not optional. This is exactly why the shilajit conversation online is mostly about metals.

Non-detect is not the same as zero

It means below the lab's detection limit. That is fine and it is honest. A report claiming a flat zero is less trustworthy, not more.

A lower active percentage can mean a more honest product

Men online learned this the hard way. Some sellers spike an extract to hit a headline percentage. A plausible number from a named lab beats an impressive number from nobody.

The bloodwork conversation

What to ask for, how to time it, and the point at which this stops being a supplement question.

Ask for the full picture, not one number

Total testosterone alone is close to useless on its own. Ask for free testosterone, SHBG, LH, and a thyroid panel with TSH and free T4.

Add the boring ones that actually explain fatigue

Ferritin, vitamin D, B12, and a full blood count. Low ferritin explains an enormous number of tired men and is invisible unless you ask for it specifically.

Time the draw

Morning, fasted, and not the day after a terrible night or a long flight. One badly timed draw sends men down expensive rabbit holes.

Test before you stack, not after

A baseline is what makes the next test mean anything. Without it you are guessing about your own guessing.

Know when this stops being a supplement question

Sudden or severe fatigue, unexplained weight change, or symptoms that arrived quickly are a doctor's appointment, not a shelf. Nothing in this book is a substitute for that.

Why most stacks fail

Five failure modes. Almost every disappointing supplement story is one of these, not a bad ingredient.

You changed five things at once

Then something worked and you have no idea which one. Add one thing at a time, hold it two weeks, write down what happened.

You took it for nine days

Most of what is on the shelf needs four to eight weeks. Nine days tells you about the placebo response and nothing else.

You bought the cheapest version of an extract

For minerals, cheap is fine. For standardised botanical extracts, cheap usually means underdosed or unstandardised, and you tested nothing.

You were fixing the wrong problem

Half the men who show up asking about testosterone boosters have a sleep problem, an iron problem, or a training load problem. The shelf cannot fix any of those.

You never wrote anything down

Memory is a terrible instrument for slow change. The tracker at the back of this guide exists because of this one.

Honey and bee products, honestly

This is our own category, so here is the version with the marketing removed.

What bee products actually are

Royal jelly is what a colony feeds a queen, and it is compositionally different from what it feeds everything else. Bee pollen is a whole food carrying protein and micronutrients rather than an isolate. Raw honey is a simple, fast carbohydrate.

Where the evidence sits

There is published work on royal jelly and fatigue markers, on bee pollen composition, and on honey as a carbohydrate source around exercise. All of it is ingredient-level research. None of it is a study of any finished product, ours included.

Why the format matters more than it sounds

A capsule has to be swallowed, timed and remembered. A honey base is absorbed quickly, which is why these are felt in minutes rather than weeks. That is a delivery advantage, not a potency claim.

The honest limitation

This is food, not pharmacology. It works on the same day you take it. It is not going to reorganise your hormones over a quarter, and anyone telling you otherwise is selling harder than the evidence allows.

Where it fits in this book

Under 'situational, and useful for a specific job'. If your problem is the two hours after work, it is a good tool. If your problem is chronic fatigue across every hour of every day, start with the foundations and the bloodwork instead.

The 30 day protocol

Four weeks. One new variable at a time. At the end you will know what actually does something for you, which is more than most men learn in four years.

The order matters. Foundations first, because they are free and because they are the most common real cause. Then the two highest evidence items. Then, and only then, anything botanical.

The one rule. If you add two things in the same week, the month is wasted. You will get a result and no idea what produced it.

Week 1 • Baseline and foundations

- ✓ Fix the wake time. Same time daily, including Saturday.
- ✓ Ten minutes of outdoor light within an hour of waking.
- ✓ Forty grams of protein before 10am.
- ✓ Book the bloodwork. Do not start any new supplement this week.
- ✓ Score your energy 1 to 10 at 10am, 3pm and 8pm. Write it down.

Week 2 • One variable

- ✓ Keep everything from week 1.
- ✓ Add creatine, 5g daily, taken whenever you will actually remember.
- ✓ Add magnesium glycinate at night if sleep is the weak link.
- ✓ Still no botanicals. You are building a baseline you can trust.
- ✓ Keep scoring. Look for a change in the 3pm number specifically.

Weeks three and four

Week 3 • The second variable

- ✓ Add boron at the label dose, or zinc only if your bloodwork showed you were low.
- ✓ If you are trialling a botanical, start now and start at half the label dose.
- ✓ Hold training volume steady this week so it is not a confounder.
- ✓ Note any foggy days and what you took the day before.

Week 4 • Read the data

- ✓ Compare week 4 scores against week 1. Look at the pattern, not any single day.
- ✓ Anything that produced no change across two weeks comes out of the stack.
- ✓ Retest bloodwork only if week 1 flagged something specific.
- ✓ Decide what earns a permanent place and what was expensive urine.

At the end of week 4, anything that did not move a number across two consecutive weeks comes out. Keeping it because it might be working quietly is how the drawer filled up in the first place.

What to expect and when

Most disappointment in this category is a timeline problem. Men quit at day nine on something that needed six weeks, and they expect a quarter of change from something that works in an hour.

WINDOW	WHAT LANDS IN IT
Same day	Honey and bee products, caffeine, carbohydrate timing. If it is going to work, you know within the hour.
Under a week	Boron, magnesium on sleep, and any correction of an actual deficiency you had.
Two to four weeks	Creatine's full saturation, and the first honest read on a botanical.
Four to eight weeks	Ashwagandha on stress and sleep. This is the window most men quit before reaching.
Never	Anything promising a hormonal transformation from a capsule. That is not how any of this works.

The honest version of our own product. It sits in the first row. It is food, it is absorbed quickly, and you will know inside an hour whether it does anything for you. That is the whole promise, and it is the only one we can support.

Who this is not for

Five situations where the answer is not a supplement, and where treating it as one costs you time you may not have.

- ✗ Men under 25 with normal energy looking for an edge. You do not have a problem to fix yet.
- ✗ Anyone whose fatigue arrived suddenly or came with weight change, chest symptoms or breathlessness. That is a doctor, today, not a supplement.
- ✗ Men on blood pressure, blood thinning, diabetes or psychiatric medication who have not cleared this with a prescriber.
- ✗ Anyone with a bee product allergy. Royal jelly and bee pollen are genuine allergens and the reaction can be serious.
- ✗ Men who want one thing to fix a life that is running on five hours of sleep. The shelf loses that fight every time.

Say this out loud. Fatigue that arrived suddenly, or came with weight change, breathlessness or chest symptoms, is a doctor's appointment today. No guide, ours included, is a substitute for someone examining you.

The tracker

Print this page, or use the Notion version that came with it. Score energy 1 to 10 at three fixed times. The pattern is the data, never a single day.

Two weeks fits on this page. Week one is your baseline, so do not change anything while you fill it in.

Six red flags in supplement marketing

You are going to keep being sold to after you finish this guide. These are the six tells that cost men the most money.

A percentage with no lab named

'Contains 80% fulvic acid' means nothing without a report from a named lab tied to a batch. The number is the easiest thing on a label to invent.

Before and after photos on a supplement

Body composition changes come from training and food. A photo pair attached to a capsule is telling you about the eight months of work that happened around it.

A study cited without a dose

If the ad says 'clinically studied' and will not tell you the dose used, it is because the dose in the product is lower. This is the most common trick in the category.

Urgency that never expires

A countdown that resets when you reload is not a deadline. It is a widget. Judge the offer as if the timer were not there, because it is not.

A brand that has no 'not for you'

Every real product is wrong for somebody. A seller who cannot name a single man who should not buy theirs is not describing a product, they are describing a wish.

Reviews that all sound like one person

Read six in a row. Real reviews disagree with each other about small things. Manufactured ones agree about everything and mention the product name more than a human would.

Building a stack on a budget

Three tiers. The cheapest one outperforms most expensive stacks, because most expensive stacks are four botanicals fighting each other while the basics go missing.

About \$20 a month • The floor, and it beats most \$120 stacks

- ✓ Creatine monohydrate, 5g daily. Unflavoured, the cheapest reputable brand you can find.
- ✓ Magnesium glycinate at night.
- ✓ That is the whole list. Both have real evidence and neither needs a COA hunt.
- ✓ Spend nothing else until you have run this for six weeks.

About \$50 a month • Add the cheap, fast movers

- ✓ Everything above.
- ✓ Boron at the label dose. Costs almost nothing and men report a fast read on it.
- ✓ Vitamin D if your bloodwork showed you low, and only then.
- ✓ Still no botanicals. You are still building a baseline you can trust.

About \$100 a month • Now you can afford to experiment

- ✓ Everything above.
- ✓ One botanical at a time, standardised, from a seller who publishes a batch COA.
- ✓ A same-day tool if your problem is a specific window rather than the whole day.
- ✓ Budget for a second blood draw. Testing is a better purchase than a fourth bottle.

Questions men actually ask

Do I need to cycle any of this?

Creatine, magnesium and boron do not need cycling. Botanicals are where men report diminishing returns, so cycling four to six weeks on and one to two weeks off is a reasonable default.

Can I take several of these together?

You can, but not while you are still working out what does anything. Build the stack one item at a time, then combine once you know what each piece contributes.

What if my bloodwork comes back normal?

That is useful information, not a dead end. Normal bloodwork with real fatigue points at sleep, training load, iron, thyroid or stress, which is where the foundations chapter earns its place.

Is more expensive better?

For minerals, no. For standardised botanical extracts, price and standardisation correlate loosely, and the COA matters more than either.

Why does a honey brand tell me to buy creatine?

Because a guide that only recommended our product would be an advertisement, and you would be right not to trust it. Creatine has better evidence than anything we sell. Saying so is the only way the rest of this book is worth reading.

Sources and honest limits

Search terms rather than links, so they keep working and so you can see the whole literature rather than the one paper we picked.

- ✓ Royal jelly and fatigue markers: search PubMed for 'royal jelly fatigue' and 'royal jelly exercise performance'.
- ✓ Bee pollen composition: search PubMed for 'bee pollen nutritional composition'.
- ✓ Honey as a carbohydrate source: search PubMed for 'honey carbohydrate exercise performance'.
- ✓ Ashwagandha, stress and sleep: search PubMed for 'Withania somnifera stress sleep randomized'.
- ✓ Creatine and cognition under sleep deprivation: search PubMed for 'creatine sleep deprivation cognition'.
- ✓ Shilajit composition and heavy metals: search PubMed for 'shilajit fulvic acid composition' and 'shilajit heavy metals'.
- ✓ Fadogia agrestis toxicity signals: search PubMed for 'Fadogia agrestis toxicity'.
- ✓ Every reference above is to research on an **INGREDIENT**, at its own dosing. None of it studied a finished product, and none of it studied Honey Overdrive.

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If your problem is the two hours after work

Honey Overdrive is 20g of royal jelly, bee pollen and raw honey with herbal extracts. Four actives, named on the pack. It belongs in the first row of the timeline table, and nowhere else.

We would rather you read chapter two and fix your sleep first. If you have already done that and the evening is still the part you keep losing, this is the tool for that specific job.

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