



GOOD HEALTH MATTERS

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World Health Day – 7th April

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THE HUMAN IMMUNE SYSTEM AND INFECTIOUS DISEASE

During the Flu or viral season, many of your mates might get sick but some would stand tall even when everyone in their home is sick with the flu. Have you ever wondered, how some people get sick very often and some are more prone to catching cold or viral infection? It's all about the body's immune system. The immune system is the first line of defense of our body against an alien microorganism entering the body. The immune system consists of organs, cells, tissues, and proteins. Together, these carry out bodily processes that fight off pathogens, which are the viruses, bacteria, and foreign bodies that cause infection or disease.

When the immune system comes into contact with a pathogen, it triggers an immune response. The immune system releases antibodies, which attach to antigens



on the pathogens and kill them. Stronger your immune system, lesser would be the chance of you falling ill.

With little change in your diet and routine, you can ensure that your immune system is strong enough to protect you against the virus infection. From sleeping for 8 hours to walking in the sun to eating a balanced diet, the ways are simple but they can really be helpful if followed. Follow them and witness the change in your body's strength to fight illness.

How to Boost Your Immune System Naturally

According to Harvard Medical School, in order to function well, our immune systems require balance and harmony. Here are several ways to promote that balance through diet, exercise, supplements and other healthy-living strategies.

- 1. Remember your A-B-C-D-Es.** A lack of micronutrients – i.e., vitamins – has been linked to reduced immunity. Taking a multivitamin supplement, along with eating a healthy diet rich in natural sources of nutrients, boosts overall health as well as the immune system. In particular, vitamins A, B2, B6, C, D and E have been studied in relation to immune response, and seem to play a key role in helping us avoid illness.
- 2. Get some sun.** Spending some time in natural light is one of the key ways our bodies manufacture vitamin D. Vitamin D plays a role in helping our immune systems produce antibodies; low levels of vitamin D, on the other hand, have been correlated with a higher risk of respiratory infection
- 3. Open your mouth and say “om.”** While the physical effects of stress are still being studied by scientists, studies have so far proven that chronic stress can lead to a variety of negative effects on physical and emotional well-being, including a reduced immune response. Stress -reducing practices like meditation, massage, and even music can help us relax and improve our immune function.

Which foods boost the immune system?

- Blueberries.
- Dark chocolate. ...
- Turmeric. ...
- Oily fish. ...
- Broccoli. ...
- Sweet potatoes. ...
- Spinach. ...
- Ginger
- Garlic
- Green Tea
- Sunflower Seeds
- Oranges
- Kiwi
- Almonds
- Red Bell pepper

4. **Try turmeric.** The bright orange-yellow spice that gives curries a distinct flavor and mustard its color also has anti-inflammatory properties, and there is increasing evidence that it helps prevent illness, too. Particularly relevant for seniors, extracts of turmeric seem to play a role in preventing cancer, slowing Alzheimer's, and alleviating arthritis pain.
5. **Get Sufficient Sleep :** Lack of sleep can cause the inflammatory immune response to activate, reducing the activity of T cells in the body. This can weaken your immune system and response to vaccines. Try to sleep for 7-8 hours and avoid having an all-nighter. If you happen to be travelling in different time zones on a regular basis, consume 2-3mg of Melatonin to reset the circadian rhythm. Run a relaxing bath.
6. **Eat more vegetables.** Vegetables, as well as fruits, nuts, and seeds, are loaded with nutrients that we need to keep our immune systems in top health. In particular, cruciferous vegetables like cabbage, kale, and broccoli help support liver function, a key part of our bodies' natural detoxification process.
7. **Micromanage your minerals.** In addition to a range of vitamins, it is important to get enough – but not too much – of key minerals that are important to daily health. Selenium, according to Harvard Medical School, may help prevent cancer, and zinc is a critical ingredient for the proper function of our immune cells. However, experts caution that too much zinc can actually impair immune function, so it's important to stick to the recommended daily allowance.
8. **Make room for 'shrooms.** Mushroom are nature's way of breaking down the organic matters to convert it into fertile soil. One of the healthiest food on the planet, mushrooms are rich in essential nutrients and minerals. Some of the mushrooms that are really good for immune systems are – A Turkey tail mushroom, Maitake and Shiitake Mushrooms, Tremella Mushrooms. They're also loaded with antioxidants.
9. **Try herbal remedies.** Scientists are still studying the effectiveness of many herbal supplements traditionally used as health boosters, like echinacea and ginseng, but

best foods to BOOST IMMUNITY



whether or not they have a measurable effect on the immune system, a soothing tea can help with relaxation, sleep, and stress reduction. Of course, you should always talk to a doctor before making herbal treatments a regular part of your arsenal.

Pungent but tasty garlic and ginger are both delicious, immune-boosting additions to the family diet. Raw garlic in particular contains antimicrobial and cancer-fighting agents, and ginger has been used for centuries in traditional medicine to treat nausea, colds, and flu symptoms.

10. **Spice up your cooking.** Pungent but tasty garlic and ginger are both delicious, immune-boosting additions to the family diet. Raw garlic in particular contains antimicrobial and cancer-fighting agents, and ginger has been used for centuries in traditional medicine to treat nausea, colds, and flu symptoms.
11. **Keep on moving.** Regular exercise contributes to our overall health in numerous ways, and a healthy body means a smoothly functioning immune system. Some forms of exercise, like tai chi and yoga, are also particularly suited for reducing stress and improving the strength, balance and flexibility that we often lose as we age.
12. **Consider taking probiotics.** Probiotics, or "good" bacteria, are not only an important part of a healthy digestive process but also our immune systems, though scientists are still studying exactly how and why this happens. A study on athletes found that probiotic supplements helped prevent and combat colds, but you can also get probiotics from naturally fermented food sources, like yogurt and kimchi.

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The gut is the seat of all feeling. Polluting the gut not only cripples your immune system, but also destroys your sense of empathy, the ability to identify with other humans



Wonders of Wellness