



Vitalia HEALTHCARE

BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM THIS COLD & FLU SEASON, NATURALLY!!!

It's that time again, the dreaded cold and flu season! Fortunately, our body has excellent defense mechanisms to protect us from these harmful viruses and bacteria. Its time to start boosting your immune system.... Naturally!!!

Our best defense against these nasty infections is to support our body's natural defenses through lifestyle, nutrition, and supplements.

Lifestyle:

I know we have heard it over and over again, but washing your hands frequently is the first and best way to protect yourself from viruses and bacteria. A virus can live up to 48 hours on a surface. That means, the doorknob you just touched could have hundreds of viruses on it that have been there for 2 days! So, wash your hands frequently!! I also suggest wearing cotton gloves everywhere you go so your hands don't touch hard surfaces. Cold and flu germs live longer on hard surfaces than soft surfaces such as fabric. Secondly, avoid touching your face with your hands. Use a tissue if you must scratch your nose. Don't bite your nails. Avoid rubbing your eyes. Avoid handshakes as much as possible. These are all avenues for germs to enter your body.

Stress

Another important consideration is the amount of stress you are under. Research shows without a doubt the relationship between stress and your immune system. When you are under stress your immunity is reduced.

Through an area of research known as psychoneuroimmunology, we now know that the immune system, once thought to be autonomous, is now known to respond to signals from many other systems in the body, particularly the nervous system and the endocrine system. As a consequence, environmental events to which the nervous system and endocrine system respond can also elicit responses from the immune system. In other words, stress which affects our nervous system, will also affect our hormone system and immune system. It is all linked!!! To read more on this, see the specific study conducted at the University of Kentucky <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1361287/>



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So practice stress reducing strategies. Take time out for yourself, pay attention to how many things you take upon yourself. If you are feeling overwhelmed just stop and take 5 or 10 minutes to just breathe and relax. It makes a huge difference in what is going on in your body.

Sleep

Sleep is essential. This is when the body heals. So get a good nights rest. Minimize alcohol and caffeine intake which can affect sleep. Go to be a little earlier and get your 7 or 8 hours good sleep. When you are exhausted, your ability to fight infections is affected.

Nutrition

Diet is extremely important. Avoid processed foods and foods high in sugar. Soft drinks and diet sodas full of aspartame will directly reduce your immunity. Herbal teas, green tea, diluted fruit juices would be better choices.

Focus more on whole grains, colorful fruits and vegetables, cold water fish, beans, nuts. These foods will give us the vitamins and minerals we need to keep our immune systems strong.

Supplements

***The information provided is not intended to diagnose or treat any health condition. Please consult with your doctor or naturopathic doctor before starting any new supplement program as they may have interactions with certain medications. ***

Now with vitamins, I suggest starting with a good high quality multivitamin/mineral supplement. You can see your local naturopathic doctor in your area that can discuss what the right supplement is for you because everyone is different.

Here are some of my favorites:

1. Vitamin D.

There is so much on-going research on the immune boosting benefits of Vitamin D. We mostly get this nutrient (technically a hormone) from the sun. Living in Vancouver in the winter months, we don't get that much sunshine so we are at a higher risk for vit D deficiency. So a good vitamin D supplement can help boost your immune system and

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provide anti-cancer benefits. The list of the benefits of Vitamin D is long. I always suggest this nutrient to my patients both in summer and winter months. During the winter, 2000 IU (up to 4000 IU) per day is a good dosage. Again, discuss this with your naturopathic or family doctor as some people should avoid Vitamin D if they are taking certain medications. Fish oil is also a good source of vitamin D.

2. Vitamin A

Vitamin A in the form of beta carotene is also a good choice. 5000 - 10,000IU per day is suggested. Avoid Vitamin A if you are pregnant as doses higher than 5000 IU has been linked to birth defects. Bright colored vegetables, carrots, spinach, sweet potatoes are great sources of Vitamin A.

3. Good old vitamin C.

1000-2000mg a day is great for prevention. Not the chewable orange candy flavored vitamin C which also contains sugar. I am talking about pure ascorbic acid vitamin C. If you are already sick, Vitamin C can shorten the time you are sick by 1-2 days. Trust me, 1-2 days means a lot when you are sick in bed! Vitamin C is also a great anti-histamine to dry up a runny nose.

4. Zinc

Zinc is a great nutrient to boost our immune system. You may have tried zinc lozenges; they really do help with viral infections! Taking zinc lozenges when you are sick reduces the time you are sick. Zinc gluconate or acetate lozenges every 2 hours within the first 2 days of a cold can reduce its duration. Lozenges that contain at least 9-24mg of zinc are most effective. Check out this great study:
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3136969/>

5. Echinacea

I use this plant on a daily basis for prevention. It is great for stimulating the immune system preventatively, and great as an anti-viral if you are already sick. Those individuals with compromised immune systems, HIV positive, or with auto-immune conditions should avoid Echinacea. Again, talk to your doctor. If you have a ragweed allergy you may also want to avoid this plant as it is from the same family.

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6. Lastly turmeric.

I can't say enough about Turmeric. It is my favorite spice! It is great for fighting off viruses and boosting your immune system. ¼ tsp 3 times a day in some water or in a capsule form is great.

Pascoleucyn. We administer an herbal/homeopathic product under the tongue or in an IV with vitamins and minerals including vitamin C. Nice way to boost the immune system. We have many patients right now that come in for their vitamin/mineral IV.

7. Grapefruit seed extract, oregano oil, garlic

These are all great options too. They are easily available, cheap and effective.

So whether you decide to get the flu vaccine or not, I suggest taking all of these steps and simple but effective supplements to boost your immune system. By providing our body with nutrients, stress management and rest, and by removing processed foods we are supporting our immune system. So if we do get sick, we are increasing our body's ability to fight the virus and recover faster.

What to do if you do get sick; Dr Alibhai's recipe for a speedy recovery!

As soon as you notice a scratchy throat or like you are coming down with a cold, start taking vitamin C: 1000-2000mg every 2-3 hours for 8 hours. Watch out, for some people Vitamin C at this dosage can cause diarrhea; if this happens cut down on the dosage. Then continue Vitamin C at 1000 mg 3 times a day for the next 3-5 days. Better yet, come to Vitalia Health Care and get 10,000-15,000 mg Vitamin C in an intravenous infusion (IV). Works very well for a quick recovery from a cold or flu.

Also take 10,000 IU of Vitamin A. Do not use in children, pregnant women or those with liver disease.

Take one 250 mg capsule of Astragalus (A Chinese herb known to stimulate the immune system) twice a day until you are feeling better.

Add garlic to your food. If you can do it, eat a clove of garlic.



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Keep yourself warm with lots of fluids, soups, and teas such as ginger or Echinacea tea. Get plenty of rest the first day! I always find the first 2 days are the most important to rest. If you push it, your cold or flu will seem to last much longer and be more severe!

Many people seem to have weakened immune systems and feel like they get a cold or flu very frequently. For these individuals, I highly recommend seeing a Naturopathic Doctor at Vitalia Health Care who can customize an effective treatment strategy individualized for you. Vitalia Health Care offers state of the art diagnostic testing which may provide clues about a weakened immune system. Many of the treatments I have suggested can be administered in an intravenous infusion, thereby by-passing the digestive system and delivered right into your cells! Your immune system will love it!

For those seeking alternatives to the flu shot, Vitalia Health Care offers an immune booster that can be administered either as an injection or taken by mouth once or twice this cold and flu season.

The immune booster, Pascoleucyn, is a combination of natural herbs and homeopathics which will boost the immune system and help the body fight off infections such as the flu virus. This combination has no side effects and does not contain any toxic compounds!

The immune booster has been adopted by major companies as awareness of the toxicity and potential side effects of the traditional flu vaccine grows. At Telus, increasing demands for natural options has led the company to include the natural immune booster as an option for their employees who do not want to have the flu vaccine.

"Dr. Tasreen Alibhai had the foresight to recommend that Telus Mobility offer a healthy, effective alternative to its team members. I have noticed that when I take it, it improves my immune system for those times when I

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am not able to improve it on my own. We are pleased to offer this immune system booster to those of our staff who are interested."

- K.G., TELUS Mobility regional Wellness Specialist

"For the last 3 years I had the natural immune booster shot from Dr. Alibhai. All of my family and friends were ill and I didn't get the flu and I credit the immune booster"

- . M.P., Registered Nurse

For more information on any of these treatments, or to book an appointment, please contact Vitalia Health Care at **604-732-3422**

Yours in Health,

Dr Tasreen Alibhai, ND