

Staying Healthy and Preventing the Flu this Winter

For now, the best defenses are washing your hands frequently, disinfecting cell phones, door handles, and office pens. Don't forget getting plenty of rest and exercise, and sneezing or coughing in your sleeve. However, the best defense truly lies with building a strong immune system.

You can look in your kitchen for help. That's right – foods can be a great way to boost your immune system, keeping you healthy. Here are a few helpful tips this season to naturally strengthen you and your loved one's immune system.

Dr. Allen's A to Z nutrient tips

Vitamin A/Beta Carotene- Helps boost Natural Killer (NK) cells used as first line of defense to kill virus infected cells. Foods: carrots, pumpkin, squash, sweet potatoes, yams.

Vitamin C – Strengthens white blood cells for fighting infection. Lowers histamine levels that cause nasal congestion. Foods: broccoli, brussel sprouts, jicama, mango, oranges, papaya.

Homemade Chicken Soup - Contains natural chemical, acetylcysteine - helps thin mucous in lungs making it easier to expel. Remember to add lots of veggies – all colorful along with warming spices below– ginger, garlic, red pepper, turmeric.

Vitamin D3 – Research now shows D3 helps immune system fight off virus attacks. Best to supplement up to 5000 IUs daily during winter season.

Horseradish Root - Mucous moving foods known as mucokinectic agent - releases waves of fluids that make eyes water and noses run. Helps break up congestion in sinus and lung bronchial passages.

Garlic – Increases NK cells. Contains allicin – gives garlic its flavor and helps regulate mucous flow.

Ginger – Destroys influenza viruses.

Hypericum (St John's Wort) – Antiviral, anti-inflammatory, antidepressant

Omega 3 – Halts inflammatory cytokines that create fever, headaches, body pains. Foods: flaxseeds, halibut, salmon, walnuts.

Probiotics – support the healthy gut bacteria that represent 80% of the immune system

Quercetin – Prevents virus from multiplying and blocks histamine. Foods: apples, capers, onions, red grapes, tea.

Shiitake Mushrooms – Boost immunity – antiviral.

Turmeric – Blocks virus from entering your respiratory system-so H1N1 can't replicate. Foods: curry powders, mustard.

Yogurt – Increases NK cell activity, revs up antibodies. 1-2 cups daily.

Zinc – Deficiency seen in elderly and those with weak immune systems. Foods: oysters, raw pumpkin seeds, yogurt.

For supplements containing these ingredients, and a full assessment and treatment from Dr. Allen to help boost your immunity, make an appointment today!