

Building a Strong Immune System

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With the cold and flu season still upon us and the recent Covid-19 virus a pandemic, it is important that you build a strong immune system. Quality sleep, stress coping tools, a healthy gut, a positive attitude and a whole foods diet are imperative for fighting viruses.

1. Ensure good quality sleep.
 - 7-9 hours per night
 - Bed before 11 pm
 - Keep regular bedtime and wake up times
 - A dark room
 - No screen time 1 hour before sleep
2. Stress coping strategies. Chronic stress suppresses the immune system. Find the tools that work for you.
 - Deep breathing (many apps are available)
 - Exercise (in nature if possible) moderate intensity
 - Meditation
 - Laughter
 - Attitude! Your attitude towards stress can actually alter the stress hormones.
3. Regular moderate exercise. Find the activity you enjoy and just do it. Outside and in nature whenever possible.
4. Ensure a healthy gut. 70 % of our immunity is in our gut. Support good microbiome health with fermented foods. Kimchi, tempeh, kombucha, sauerkraut, kefir, plain full fat yoghurt.
5. Avoid pro inflammatory foods such as sugar, refined foods, alcohol, fried foods, red meat, dairy.
6. Immune boosting foods to add to your diet: ginger, flax, kale, turmeric, citrus, leafy greens, chlorella
7. Colorful fruits and vegetables high in antioxidants are essential for strong immunity, along with foods high in vitamins A, C, E, selenium, zinc, quercetin, and vitamin D

Food sources for the above: carrots, pumpkin, squash, dandelion greens, (Vitamin A) oranges, broccoli, berries, peppers, kale,(vitamin C) almonds, wheat germ, unsulfured dried apricots, (Vitamin E) brazil nuts, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, tuna, asparagus (Selenium), pumpkins seeds, cooked oysters, hemp, tahini, dark chocolate (zinc), cruciferous vegetables, apples, berries, nuts, seeds, tomatoes (quercetin), wild salmon, eggs, turkey, chicken, (Vitamin D)

8. Omega 3 foods: flax, chia, hemp, walnuts, sardines, wild salmon, mackerel, avocados
9. Anti-viral foods: Garlic, onions oregano, sage, fennel, peppermint, rosemary, elderberries, licorice, echinacea, astragalus, ginger, ginseng, dandelion greens, curcumin
10. Be kind, be grateful. Much research is being done on how kindness and gratitude are beneficial for good health.

Create a meal plan with the above foods, set aside time for exercise, make a bedtime ritual, practice stress management, keep a positive attitude, be kind and be HEALTHY.