

Balance Your Immune Health



Immune System Health

BY NOEMY JORGE MS, RD, CDN

Your immune system relies on a delicate balance of healthy lifestyle choices. There are many factors that affect our immune system that are out of our control such as age, pre-existing conditions, and genetics. However, we can focus on very specific health indicators to ensure our immune system is working at its full capacity. Here are a few things to work on for this winter season.

- **Get vaccinated (Flu/COVID/etc)**
- **Manage your pre-existing conditions (blood sugar levels, blood pressure, taking medications, etc).**
- **Stay away from sick people. If you are sick, stay home.**
- **Quit smoking. Avoid alcohol and/or drink in moderation.**
- **Learn to manage your stress in a healthy way (seek therapy, journal, go for walks, talk to a friend/loved one)**
- **Get regular exercise (recommended minimum of 150 minutes of moderate activity per week)**
- **Get adequate sleep (Toddlers need 11-14 hours of sleep, Adults need 7-9 hours of sleep)**
- **Wash your hands regularly (after using the bathroom, before and after preparing food and eating, after taking out the trash, and after leaving a public place)**
- **Eat lots of fruits, vegetables, lean protein, and healthy fats.**

Your Immune System was designed to fight off disease. Focusing on having a balanced healthy lifestyle will help your body do what it is meant to do... Protect you.

Foods and Beverages that Help Support Your Immune System

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When people are sick, many tend to crave and look for the very foods and beverages that their body needs to prevent sickness. What if we commit to having those foods and beverages more often? What if we don't have to wait until something is wrong for us to listen to our body's needs. Think about those foods and beverages that give you the most comfort and relief when you are ill and ask yourself why is that? See if you can spot some of those foods and beverages in this list.

- **Hydration. It is recommended to drink 8 cups of 8 ounces of water per day. Tea is a great way to stay hydrated in the winter. Ginger tea, green tea and golden milk with turmeric are recommended to reduce inflammation and provide antioxidants.**
- **Soups provide hydration and combine lots of wonderful vegetables and proteins that your immune system needs such as carrots, celery, peppers, broccoli, spinach, kale, garlic, chicken, and fish.**

- **Vitamin C - Add lemon to your tea and/or soup, eat your citrus fruits such as oranges, papaya, strawberries, and kiwi, throw some vegetables and herbs in your soup and foods such as peppers, broccoli, kale, parsley, and thyme.**
- **Vitamin B6 - Found in your chicken, salmon, tuna, chickpeas, dark leafy greens, oranges, cantaloupe, and papaya.**
- **Vitamin E - An antioxidant found in peppers, pumpkin, dark leafy greens, avocado, nuts, asparagus, and mango.**
- **Zinc - Found seafood, beef, chicken, beans, mushroom, and yogurt.**
- **Vitamin A - Found in eggs, yogurt, fatty fish like salmon and sardines, and your yellow/orange fruits and vegetables like carrots, peppers, mango, papaya, and your dark leafy greens like spinach.**
- **Probiotics found in yogurt, pickled vegetables and fruits such as sauerkraut, kimchi, pickles, chutneys, and miso.**

If you have any vitamin or mineral deficiency, consider speaking to your doctor about supplementing. If you do not eat these foods regularly consider taking a multivitamin. However, the best way to get all these nutrients is in food.

Visit noemyjorge.com to schedule an appointment with me through your insurance. Insurance eligibility will be determined.

