

How to Support Your Immune System

Everyone seems to be asking what foods are best to “boost” the immune system. Are there foods that will help your body fight sickness better than others? Our immune system is complex so there isn’t a specific food or a certain amount of food you can eat to boost it.

Instead, we want to focus on a balanced diet that includes at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Some nutritionists even encourage seven servings a day. Adding fruits and vegetables of any kind will help ensure your body receives the nutrients — vitamins, minerals, and fiber — it needs to work properly. Vitamins A, C, E, and zinc are nutrients that will help support the immune system when it needs to work hard. Choosing a variety of fruits and vegetables that match the rainbow will be the best source of these nutrients. By getting enough nutrients, you improve your body’s ability to fight sickness.

In reality, we don’t want to “boost” our immune system because it will overreact. This can actually put more stress on the body. Instead, we want to choose foods and healthy lifestyle behaviors that support the immune system to respond appropriately when under stress. As we age, our immune system function declines. However, there are steps you can take to support a healthy immune system so that it can respond appropriately when faced with seasonal illness. Keys to staying healthy for people of any age are much broader than nutrition and include:

- Choose brightly colored plant-based foods, such as fruits and vegetables.
- Choose lean proteins.
- Stay hydrated with water.
- Be physically active on a regular basis.
- Get an adequate amount of sleep.
- Find ways to reduce stress.
- Practice good hygiene, and wash hands often.

Reference:

<https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/preventing-illness/support-your-health-with-nutrition#:~:text=Get%20this%20immune-boosting%20vitamin,of%20antibodies%20and%20boosting%20immunity.>

Sources:

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