



Protect Yourself and Others—Healthy Aging

As you get older, you may notice your body responds differently to the common cold. You feel wiped out and it may seem as if your runny nose, cough, fatigue and other symptoms linger for weeks. Why does it take so long to recover? More importantly, what can you do to strengthen your immune system.

How do you boost your Immune system naturally?

To protect your immune system as you age, take steps to protect your overall health.

Prioritize Sleep. During sleep, your immune system releases proteins that help fight off infection. Sleep deprivation may decrease the production of these protective cells. Sleep is possibly the most critical aspect of immunity, more so than diet or exercise. The lack of sleep can make you sick.

Exercise Regularly. Aim for two strength training sessions and 150 minutes of moderate cardiovascular exercise weekly—can increase the activity of virus-killing cells.

Eat a Balanced Diet. You'll find arguments related to the pros and cons of a wide range of specialty diets, including Paleo, low carb, vegetarian, Mediterranean and more. However, most of these diets share one crucial feature. They encourage consuming fewer ultra processed foods, and eating more minimally processed whole foods like fish, low-fat dairy, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds. The focus on minimally processed whole foods—especially whole plant foods—may reduce inflammation by improving gut health.

Super Immune Boosters: Almonds* Broccoli* Citrus* Cruciferous vegetables (Bok choy, Brussel sprouts, Kale, Cabbage) * Garlic* Green Tea* Kiwi* Live culture yogurt* Papaya* Poultry* Shellfish* Spinach* Sunflower seeds* Turmeric.

Make sure your Vaccines are up to date. Vaccines introduce your immune system to viruses in a very controlled manner. Specifically, they help the adaptive immune system spot and neutralize germs quickly. Vaccines become more critical as you get older when viruses like RSV and the flu tend to cause more severe infections. Your vaccine inoculated immune system may attack germs so effectively that you never notice symptoms like fever or runny nose. Other times, however, you might still feel sick. That doesn't mean your vaccine didn't work. Likely, the vaccine helped your body to clear the virus more quickly so you could avoid severe complications like pneumonia.

Consider Vitamin Supplements. Vitamin D—a supplement could help to safeguard those adaptive immune cells that decline with age. The recommended daily amount of Vitamin D is 600 IU for people 70 and under, 800 UI for people over 70. Vitamin C—supplementation in doses ranging from 250 to 1000 milligrams seemed to help people recover from colds more quickly, perhaps by serving as an antioxidant. Zinc—supplementation in doses ranging from 13 to 23 milligrams taken several times a day may offer similar benefits, especially when taken within 24 to 48 hours of the first symptoms.

CONSULT YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL BEFORE SUPPLEMENTING WITH EITHER NUTRIENT. IF YOU DECIDE TO SUPPLEMENT WITH C, AVOID TAKING HIGH DOSES (OVER 2000 MILLIGRAMS) FOR LONG PERIODS, AS THEY CAN LEAD TO SIDE EFFECTS LIKE NAUSEA, HEARTBURN, FATIGUE AND KIDNEY STONES.