

Ways to Boost Your Winter Immune System

As the weather gets colder and we enter flu season, it's time to give your immune system a little extra love.

Why We Get Sick in the Winter

A few ideas why colds and stomach viruses tend to peak during wintertime.

- **Cold Air, Less Moisture:** Cold air and lower humidity may make it easier for viruses to survive in the environment.
- **More Time Indoors:** Winter weather often keeps us indoors more than warm weather, giving viruses greater opportunity to spread.
- **Lack of Sunshine:** With less direct sun exposure in the winter, we lose the levels of vitamin D necessary for the activation of the immune system.
- **Processed Foods:** During the holiday season we often eat more processed foods than usual. These foods are loaded with chemicals, poor-quality oils, and sugar. For many people, processed foods are toxic triggers, overworking the immune system and causing inflammation.
- **Lack of Sleep:** The immune system uses large amounts of energy to ward off infections. Proper rest is one of the most important tools to boost the immune system and reduce stress, especially during the winter.

Boost Your Immune System

Now that you understand the possible causes of our increased susceptibility to colds in the winter, let's get to what we can do about it. Thankfully, there are lots of ways we can help prevent colds and even speed up recovery if we get a cold.

The tools to overcome colds are a combination of vitamin supplements, flu-beating drink suggestions, and lifestyle practices to support your immune system. Start adding them into your life now to stay healthy and happy all winter long.

Immune Boosting Drink Recipes

Bone Broth: Warm bone broth is a nourishing food loaded with good fats and nutrients. Have it as a drink or add it to meals.

Turmeric + ginger tea: Add grated ginger and turmeric to boiling water. Let steep for 10 minutes. Make a big pot in the morning and sip throughout the day. Honey is a great anti-viral sweetener for this time of year.

Green Juice + Ginger: Juice cucumbers, romaine leaves, celery stalks, a pear, and a 1-inch chunk of ginger for an immune boost.

Ginger Shot: For a warm version, add ginger juice, juice from half of a lemon (orange), and a little honey to six ounces of warm water.

Ginger Shot Recipe (Juice)

½ cup fresh ginger root, peeled and chopped

3 lemons, juiced (approx. ¼ cup lemon juice)

1 orange, juiced (approx. ¼ cup orange juice), or peeled and chopped

½ cup water (or coconut water for extra hydration)

1 tbsp raw honey (optional or maple syrup)

¼ tsp turmeric powder (optional)

1/8 tsp cayenne powder (optional, spicy kick and metabolism boost)

Pinch of black pepper (if using turmeric, to enhance absorption)

Instructions

1. *Prepare the ingredients: wash and peel the ginger root, then roughly chop into small pieces. Juice the lemons and orange.*
2. *Blend the mixture: add the chopped ginger, lemon juice, orange juice, water, honey (if using), and any optional spices (turmeric, cayenne, black pepper) to a high-speed blender. Blend on high speed for 1-2 minutes until the mixture is smooth.*
3. *Strain the liquid: pour the blended mixture through a fine-mesh sieve or a cheesecloth-lined colander into a clean bowl or pitcher. Use the back of a spoon to press down on the pulp and extract as much liquid as possible. Discard the remaining pulp (or save for use in teas or smoothies).*
4. *Serve and store: pour the strained ginger shot liquid into small shot glasses to serve immediately, or transfer to an airtight container or small bottles for later use. The shots can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 5-7 days or freeze in ice cube tray or silicone molds. Store for 2-3 months, but safe to use for up to 6 months. Once frozen, pop cubes into a freezer safe bag or container. Thaw in the fridge for a few hours or overnight before drinking.*

15 WAYS TO BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM THIS WINTER

LIFESTYLE PRACTICES

EXERCISES: WINTER WEATHER REDUCES OUR MOVEMENT. EXERCISE SUPPORTS OUR DETOX ORGANS AND KEEPS OUR LYMPH MOVING.

GET OUTSIDE: REDUCED FRESH AIR AND SUNSHINE IN THE WINTER IMPAIRS THE IMMUNE SYSTEM.

SLEEP: THE GREATEST TOOL FOR STRESS REDUCTION AND IMMUNE SUPPORT IS SLEEP. COMMIT TO AT LEAST 8 HOURS A NIGHT.

ALCOHOL: BE MINDFUL OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION. TOO MUCH DEPRESSES THE IMMUNE SYSTEM AND MAKES IT EASIER TO GET SICK.

HANDWASHING: SO SIMPLE WE FORGET. WASH YOUR HAND WITH HOT WATER ESPECIALLY AFTER USE AND BEFORE MAKING FOOD.

SUPPLEMENTS

VITAMIN D3: TAKE 3,000-4,000 IU OF VITAMIN D3 TO REDUCE WINTER FLU AND SEASONAL MOODINESS.

PROBIOTICS: GOOD BACTERIA DETOX WHAT WE EAT AND MODULATE THE IMMUNE SYSTEM.

ENZYMES: TAKE ENZYMES WITH HEAVY HOLIDAY MEALS TO IMPROVE DIGESTION.

MULTI: BE CONSISTENT WITH TAKING A DAILY MULTIVITAMIN WITH HIGH LEVELS OF B-VITAMINS, C AND ZINC.

IMMUNE BOOSTING DRINKS: HAVE A LOT OF BONE BROTH, TURMERIC + GINGER TEA, AND GREEN JUICE + GINGER THIS WINTER.

DIET

FRUITS + VEGETABLES: BUMP UP YOUR INTAKE OF PLANT FOODS AND GREEN POWDERS. PLANT PHYTONUTRIENTS HELP REDUCE STRESS AND INFLAMMATION.

REDUCE TRIGGER FOODS: GLUTEN, DAIRY, SUGAR, AND ALCOHOL ARE THE MOST COMMON TRIGGER FOODS. BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT WHEN YOU EAT THEM OR SUBSTITUTE FOR CLEAN WHOLE FOODS.