How to Stay Healthy All Year Long

Top 7 Immune-Boosting TIPS

Cooler temps mean plenty of fun: hot cocoa, sweater weather, and holidays with your loved ones. But they can also signal the start of sneezes, sniffles, and body aches...

Believe it or not, seasonal colds and flu are completely avoidable – with the right mix of smart habits and health hacks, you can boost your immune system and stay well.

These 7 tips will help you stay ready to fight infection and feel your best. And the best part? They work all year long!
Most folks know that vitamin D helps build strong bones. However, vitamin D also plays a key role in your immune system!

Studies show that not only can vitamin D help prevent infection, it can also shorten the length of an illness. That makes vitamin D crucial to staying well.

The best way to get vitamin D is plenty of sunshine – unprotected exposure to direct sunlight for 15-20 minutes a day is all you need to make this powerful hormone yourself. So it’s no coincidence that rates of illness rise during the winter, when sunlight is scarce!

If you’re not getting your daily dose of sunshine, then you should supplement with extra vitamin D daily. (I take Vitamin D Plus, a potent blend of vitamin D3 plus vitamin K for optimal absorption...)

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It's crucial to dial down inflammation in your body to avoid getting sick.

**Battling chronic inflammation weakens your immune system, making it harder to ward off germs.**

The main culprits behind inflammation are highly reactive foods such as gluten, soy, and dairy or a high-sugar impact diet.

Avoid fructose and added sweeteners, even when they’re all-natural. It’s also important to get plenty of natural immune boosters in your diet, including healthy omega-3 fats and a variety of superfoods. Berries, leafy greens, almonds, coconut oil, chia seeds, and clean protein from pastured chicken or grassfed beef are all a great start.
There’s truth to the old saying that vitamin C fights off a cold! Antioxidants like vitamin C help decrease your risk of infection and protect your immune cells.⁴⁵

Antioxidant-rich foods like dark chocolate, berries, apples, beans, and spinach are all smart additions to your menu so you’ll be well on your way to defending against cold and flu germs.
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“Bee” careful.

If your sick days are adding up, turn to one of nature’s immune-boosting secrets!

Bee propolis functions as the immune system of the hive, and it can do the same for you.

This naturally antioxidant-rich germ-fighter can contain up to 300 different beneficial vitamins, minerals, and compounds from plants and trees.

Bee propolis protects hives against microscopic invaders, and it’s a great ally against your own microscopic invaders, too! I use Beekeepers Natural Propolis Throat Spray anytime I’m about to board a plane or go out in a crowd.

A natural defender, propolis is a protective substance bees make by collecting plant and tree resins.
It turns out you can actually outrun those winter bugs!

You’ve heard me talk about the benefits of burst training (a.k.a. high-intensity interval training) for revving up your metabolism and burning away fat. But regular exercise also increases the production of immune cells that resist pesky invaders.²³

The best news is that you don’t need to spend hours in the gym to strengthen your immune system!

Just 10-12 minutes of HIIT 2-3 times per week is enough to have an impact.

(If you’re not sure how to create a workout that’s right for your abilities and needs, check out my super-convenient Fast Fitness Online Program. It’s what I use to stay healthy and strong all year round...)
Your gut houses 70% of your immune system and contains an entire ecosystem of trillions of microbes that play a major role in your immune function. That’s why it’s vitally important to keep your gut healthy, so you have more good guys to protect you from bacteria and viruses that can cause illness!

Choose pre- and probiotic foods to help replenish your healthy gut flora and maintain a strong immune system. Non-dairy fermented foods like sauerkraut, kimchi, and nut milk yogurt are all fantastic options, as are flaxseed, wild salmon, and bone broth.
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Get your z’s

Research proves that you need 7-8 hours of quality sleep to stimulate the production of immune cells that help fight infection.

In fact, one study found that participants who slept less than 6 hours a night the week before were 4 times more likely to catch a cold than those who got more rest!7

The lesson? If you want to stay healthy, you need to get good sleep! Develop a bedtime routine that relaxes you, like a cup of chamomile tea and an epsom salts bath, and avoid electronic screens an hour before you turn in.

If you still can’t sleep, consider keeping an all-natural sleep aid like Sleep Candy on hand to be sure you get the rest you need to protect your health.

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Here’s to a year full of fun times, great memories, and zero sick days!

ARTICLE SOURCES:
1 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3166406/
5 http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022030293776171
7 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4531403/

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