

BUILDING A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM

Immune Boosters

NUTRITION: FOODS FOR IMMUNE HEALTH

- Eat at least **5-6 servings of colourful fruits and vegetables** daily.
- **Turmeric** contains curcumin, a potent antioxidant that can act as an anti-inflammatory and enhance the body's immune system and its ability to handle various infections.
- **Oats and barley** contain beta-glucan. Beta-glucan has antimicrobial and antioxidant capabilities, which are more potent than Echinacea! Aim to include oats and/or barley in your daily diet.
- **Garlic** contains allicin, which fights infection & bad bacteria. Aim for 2 cloves per day and add crushed garlic to your cooking several times a week for optimal benefits.
- **Fish**, such as salmon, mackerel & herring, are rich in omega-3 fats. These fats reduce inflammation, increasing airflow and protecting the lungs from colds and respiratory infections. Shellfish is also a good choice as it is rich in selenium. The optimal dosage is two servings per week.



OTHER GREAT IMMUNE BOOSTERS

- Citrus fruit, which is high in vitamin C.
- Black or green tea is high in L-theanine (amino acid).
- Sweet potato and other orange vegetables contain beta-carotene and vitamin A.
- Beef, turkey, and beans are great sources of zinc.
- Drink at least 8 glasses of water per day.
- Yogurt contains active bacteria that keep the gut and intestinal tract free of disease-causing germs. Aim for two 6-ounce servings daily.



GRANDMA'S CHICKEN SOUP

Good for the body and the soul.

- 10 cloves garlic, smashed (approx. 1 whole bulb)
- 2 tablespoons ginger, finely grated
- 1 tablespoon fresh turmeric, grated
- 1000 ml chicken or vegetable broth (see notes)
- 1000 ml water
- 1 ½ pounds of cooked chicken breast, cut into chunks
- 2 bunches coriander, chopped
- ¼ cup rice wine (optional, but delicious)
- 3 tablespoons tamari soy sauce

DIRECTIONS

Combine the garlic, turmeric, ginger, broth, water, and chicken into a large pot. Simmer for 30 minutes over low heat until chicken is cooked through and flavours have infused into the broth. Add rice wine, tamari, and coriander just before serving. Serve in large bowls and sip slowly. Enjoy!

Notes

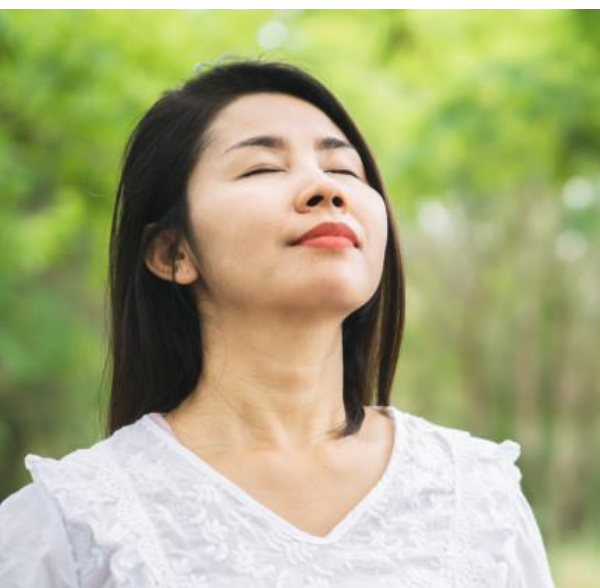
Best made with a homemade bone broth. Cook a whole chicken. Remove the meat and boil the bones in a stockpot or slow cooker for 6-12 hours with a tablespoon of vinegar.

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STRESS MANAGEMENT: IMPLEMENT SOME COPING STRATEGIES

Stressed out, lonely or depressed? Don't be surprised if you come down with something! Your body is hard-wired to protect you against threats and it even considers hassles such as a huge workload, taking care of your family and making ends meet, as threats. When stressors are always present and you constantly feel "under attack", the body's stress response system stays turned on. Long-term activation of the stress-response system can put you at an increased risk of numerous health problems, including digestive problems, heart disease, anxiety, and depression. That's why it is so important to learn healthy ways to cope with the stressors we face in day-to-day life!



IDEAS TO MANAGE STRESS

- **Laughter** is good for your health! It enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs, and muscles and increases the endorphins that are released by your brain. Watch a funny video or have a chat and a laugh with a friend!
- **Deep breathing** and learning how to **meditate** can help to centre you and clear away the thoughts that are causing you stress.
- **Journaling** is another great way to rid yourself of the worries of daily life. Write down your worries and fears before you go to bed and once the book is closed, consider yourself done with them (at least for the day).

EXERCISE: ANOTHER REASON TO GET ACTIVE

Recent studies have suggested that if you complete moderate exercise just a few times per week, you can drastically reduce the number of colds you get every year. Doctors have found that exercise can boost your immune system by providing a boost to the cells in your body that are assigned to attack bacteria. These cells appear to work more slowly in people who don't exercise. Getting active a few times a week and staying consistent will do wonders for your immune system!

TIP: Moderation is key. Working out TOO much can actually harm your immune system. Make sure you are allowing your body to have the rest it needs if you are working out strenuously.



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SLEEP: CATCH YOUR ZZZZ'S

Sleep is also key to maintaining a strong immune system. Studies show that people who don't get quality sleep or enough sleep are more likely to get sick after being exposed to a virus. Lack of sleep can also affect how fast you recover when you do get sick.



TIPS FOR HEALTHY SLEEP

- **Get enough.** The optimal amount of sleep for most adults is 7 to 8 hours of good sleep each night. Teenagers need 9 to 10 and children need 10 hours or more each night!
- Refrain from consuming caffeine in the evenings.
- Create a **calming environment** in your bedroom.
- Set a good **pre-bedtime routine** to help you get better quality sleep each night. Enjoy a hot bath, read, implement a device curfew.

LIFESTYLE FACTORS: IMMUNE SUPPRESSORS

- Excessive consumption of alcohol acts as an immune suppressant. A 2015 article in the journal *Alcohol Research: Current Reviews* states that alcohol abuse can also lead to immunodeficiency, making you more susceptible to bacterial pneumonia, respiratory distress, organ damage, and other communicable diseases.
- Here's one more reason to quit smoking. Smoking and using tobacco products contribute to inflammation and have an impact on your immune system, according to a study in 2015 from the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*.

Sources: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4590612/>
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