

NUTRITION NEWS

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DEPARTMENT

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MERRY CHRISTMAS!

My hope is for everyone to have a blessed and wholesome end to this deranged year! The amazing and scary thing about life is that we have no clue what each day holds or what it will bring. This is reason enough to live each day fully, with an open mind, and with our best intentions!

WINTER IS COMING! (Any Game of Throne fans here)?

With that being said, we know that this means flu season and common colds and oh yeah... Covid-19. I don't know, maybe you've heard of it? Which brings me to the next question, how is your immune system? Is it up to par? Well let's talk immune system support, viral protection, and travel tips since we are in the midst of the holiday seasons.



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IMMUNE HEALTH

As we are aware, cold and flu season is upon us. But part of why we experience these illnesses has a lot to do with how we care for ourselves. This time of year we spend more time indoors, travel more, see more people, and stress more financially. But not only that, this time of year more processed food, sugar, and alcohol is consumed and people are sleeping less.

Being good to your body helps keep those colds and viruses away! Here are some tips to keep that immune system in check:

- 1) **Eat Well**: Focus more on consuming organic meats, plenty of vegetables and healthy fats and ditch the processed foods, sugar, alcohol, and any foods you may be sensitive too. If anything, at least aim to have these in moderation.
- 2) **Rest and Relax**: Choose to stay in and relax and aim for 7-9 hours of sleep! Sleep really is so crucial for immune health, especially when the holidays can add more stress. But you want to be getting good quality sleep and wake feeling rested. Try to hold space for some relaxation every day.
- 3) **Wash Your Hands**: So simple, yet you would be surprised how much some people struggle with this one. Washing your hands with warm water and soap can make all the difference. No access to a sink? Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer instead of an antibacterial one. The antibacterial ones contain some of the many chemicals that disrupt your hormones.
- 4) **Take Your Herbs**: Utilizing immune supporting herbs before traveling or at the first sign of illness will help fight and keep sickness at bay. Look into Elderberry and Echinacea, as these are both beneficial herbs known to help boost the immune system.
- 5) **Exercise**: Move your body for at least 20-30 minutes per day. Get that lymphatic system circulating and sweat those toxins out of your body. Go for a walk, lift some weights, do some yoga, play some tennis, whatever excites you and motivates you to break a sweat!
- 6) **Get Your Vitamin D**: This vitamin acts as an anti-inflammatory and helps regulate the immune system. Being that we do not see as much sun in the winter months, supplementing and having your blood levels tested for deficiencies is important.

Importance of VITAMIN D!

- **Helps regulate immune system (research has shown that vitamin D supplementation can help protect against the flu and respiratory tract infections)**
- **Acts as an anti-inflammatory**
- **Maintains strong bones (required for calcium and phosphorus absorption)**
- **Helps improve mood**
- **Helps reduce risk of certain cancers**
- **Protects against heart disease**
- **Helps reduce risk of diabetes**
- **Helps reduce risk of multiple sclerosis**
- **Can regulate hundreds of genes**

Vitamin D is actually a hormone produced by the kidneys! It is estimated that almost half of U.S. residents are deficient in Vitamin D! Some Vitamin D deficiency symptoms include: frequent sickness, fatigue, muscle pain and weakness, hair loss, depression, back pain, osteoporosis and risk of fracture, and Ricketts (condition in children where bones do not solidify so weight bearing bones begin to bow). The best way to know if your Vitamin D levels are optimal is to get your blood tested by a doctor and discuss where your levels should be. The Vitamin D Council recommends the following maintenance dosages on days that you don't sunbathe:

Children: 1,000 IU/25lbs of body weight, up to 125lbs (A 50lb child would need 2,000 IU)

Adults: 5,000 IU

Pregnant and breastfeeding: 5,000 IU daily

How to increase your Vitamin D intake?

-15 minutes a day of good sun exposure

- Eat foods rich in vitamin D, like fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, sardines), cod liver oil, foods that have been fortified with Vitamin D (milk, cheese, orange juice, and some non-dairy milk products), egg yolks and beef liver. Supplementation might be your answer if you can't get sunlight or you are not getting enough in your diet. If that's the case, you want to use a good quality, highly bioavailable Vitamin D supplement. It is important to select Vitamin D3 with K2 to increase your blood levels and prevent toxicity issues.

Importance of VITAMIN C (aka ascorbic acid)!!

- 🚩 **Critical to immune system**
- 🚩 **Formation and repair of connective tissue, like collagen**
- 🚩 **Necessary for absorption of iron**
- 🚩 **Promotes wound healing and healthy blood vessels**
- 🚩 **Helps with maintenance of cartilage, bones and teeth**
- 🚩 **Acts as antioxidant**

Foods rich in vitamin C:

- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Kale
- Red, green or yellow pepper
- Sweet potato
- Tomatoes
- Strawberries
- Kiwi
- Oranges
- Lemons
- Cantaloupe
- Papaya

**Can also take a multivitamin or the packets of 'Emergen-c'

Recommended daily amount for vitamin C: **65-90 mg**

Upper limit: **2,000 mg/day**

****Vitamin C is a water-soluble vitamin naturally present in some foods, added to others, and available as a dietary supplement. Humans are unable to synthesize vitamin C, so it is essential to get it from food or supplements daily.**

****Because vitamin C is water soluble, we excrete a lot of it so taking massive doses at one time isn't the best. Space out your intake over the day to increase absorption! Get it through fruits and vegetables in all your meals, as well as a high quality multivitamin.**

Whole Chicken with Aromatics



Serves 4-6

Need a slow cooker or instant pot, or may roast in the oven.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 yellow onion, sliced
- 3 large carrots, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 whole chicken, 4-5 lbs
- 2 Tbsp coconut oil
- 1 Tbsp sea salt
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground pepper
- 2 leaves fresh sage
- 1 Tbsp fresh rosemary
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Line the bottom of slow cooker with the onions and carrots.
2. Rinse the chicken and remove giblets from its cavity. Pat the chicken dry with paper towels, then place in slow cooker, breast side down.
3. Melt the coconut oil in a small saucepan set over medium heat. Stir in the salt, black pepper, sage, rosemary, and thyme. Pour the mixture all over the chicken in slow cooker, then use your hands to rub the herbs and coconut oil over both sides, around the legs, and under the skin.
4. Set the slow cooker to low and cook the chicken and veggies 4-5 hours, or until an internal temp. reaches 165 degrees F. Cooking time will depend on size of chicken.
5. When the chicken is ready, remove it from slow cooker and let it rest for 20 min before carving. Serve the chicken with the vegetables. Recipe Credit: Dr. Brighten

"The moment you accept responsibility for everything in your life is the moment you gain the power to change anything in your life."