

Boost Your Immune System for a Healthy 2010

By Dr. Pari Limbachia, D.C.

2009 Health in Review: Influenza, Swine Flu, H1N1, allergies, asthma, stomach viruses, congestion, heart disease, breast cancer and health care reform. And as we begin a new year, we will undoubtedly be faced with new challenges concerning our health as individuals and as a society. With the rising cost of healthcare and the uncertainty of healthcare coverage, it's more important than ever to do all we can to stay strong and healthy.



Here's eight easy steps to boost your immune system.

1. Eat Healthy - Include foods that have vitamin C to help your immune system fight viruses. Foods that have vitamin C include red bell peppers, strawberries, tomatoes, broccoli, citrus, and sweet potatoes. Activate your immune system with beta glucan, zinc and other mineral-rich foods such as mushrooms, garbanzo beans, squash and deep greens (turnip or beet greens are the best). Support your thymus gland, which helps your immune system function by eating foods rich in carotenes such as yellow and orange squash, carrots, yams, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collard greens, kale, berries, and garlic. Eat all of these essential foods to boost your immune system and keep it working at its fullest throughout 2010.

2. Supplement your health - Vitamins A, C, E, B6, and folic acid as well as minerals such as zinc support much of the body's innate immune response.

These vitamins and minerals can be found in many of the foods listed above.

3. Exercise - Thirty minutes of exercise a day is essential to keep your immune system working at its best. Sweating during exercise allows your body to eliminate toxins.

4. Rest - Your body heals while you sleep. Get six to seven hours of sleep each night to allow your body to recover.

5. Reduce Stress - Have you ever heard the expression "stress can kill"? It's true. Stress has been found to decrease the function of your immune system by the production of stress hormones. Stress hormones include adrenaline and cortisol. During the stress response, your body kicks into high gear by not allowing for a normal response. To reduce stress, try yoga, meditation, exercise and Tai Chi.

6. Surround yourself with positive influences - Positive thinking can help you heal. Positive thoughts will increase your serotonin levels as well as your endorphin levels in the brain, which are key neurotransmitters (chemical messengers) that play a role in the immune system. Being



happy keeps you healthy!

7. Get Adjusted - Chiropractic adjustments to your spine will not only provide a temporary (48 hours) boost to your immune system by the release of monocytes from bone marrow, but it also helps to free up your body's resources that were being used to compensate for nervous system and joint dysfunction.

8. Balance your Meridians - Meridians are energy channels throughout your body. Acupuncture frees up your body's resources to allow the body to protect and heal itself through balancing your meridians.

Your body's health is dependent on a strong immune system, so use these steps to help you achieve optimum health throughout 2010.

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