



## **PART 2 WELLNESS TIPS TO BOOST IMMUNITY**

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### **THE NUTRITION FACTOR**

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In this segment of Wellness Tips to Boost Immunity, we turn our attention in a little more detail to nutrition.

Adequate nutrition plays an important part in building immunity. Here's how it works.

- **Vitamin A** – vital for skin nourishment, which is the first line of defence for our immune system. Orange foods like carrots, pumpkin, sweet potatoes and squash are all great sources of beta-carotene which is converted quickly in the body to vitamin A.
- **Vitamin C** - essential for normal tissue function and wound repair. It increases the production of infection-fighting white blood cells and antibodies. Fresh fruit and vegetables are good sources of Vitamin C. However foods like broccoli, red peppers, tomatoes, papaya, mangos, kiwi and citrus fruits are especially rich sources.
- **Vitamin E** - essential for maintenance of body cells and tissue health. It enhances the production of B-cells, the immune cells that produce antibodies that destroy bacteria. This vitamin contains valuable antioxidants that helps maintain optimum functioning of the immune system. Rich food sources are avocados, grains, nuts, seeds and vegetable oils.
- **Zinc** – a deficiency in this mineral can increase risk of infection significantly. Zinc assists white blood cell development and increases the amount of infection fighting T-cells. These cells are vital to help fight off viruses and foreign bacteria. This is particularly important for older adults who are often deficient in zinc and whose immune system weakens with age, hence their susceptibility to more colds and flu symptoms. Avocado, beans cereal, nuts, seeds, wheat germ are good sources of zinc.
- **Diets** below 1200 calories provide inadequate vitamins and minerals for good immunity

- **Garlic** is often referred to as 'nature's penicillin' and known for its antiviral and antibacterial properties. A compound in garlic known as allicin is known to boost the white blood cell's response to illness.
- **Onions** immune boosting nutrients are selenium, sulphur compounds, zinc, and vitamin C. Additionally they are a rich source of quercetin, a potent flavonoid and antioxidant. It also has antiviral properties and histamine regulating effects.
- **Ginger** is a warming diaphoretic that encourages perspiration. It helps in the treatment of feverish conditions such as influenza or colds. It also helps to reduce inflammation.
- **Processed foods and sugar** can suppress immunity reducing its ability to fight infections.
- **Good hydration** (about 2 litres) flushes out toxins. Adding freshly squeezed lemon to water or lemon slices gives an extra vitamin C boost.

Information source: *Enhancing Health* articles by Sharon Platt-McDonald