



EATING FOR IMMUNITY

## NUTRITION 101

# Eating for Immunity

The immune system is the body's defense against infections. When it is working well, the immune system can help protect against illnesses and infections.

Overarching good nutrition helps support your immune health. Several key lifestyle factors help keep your immune system healthy and strong. Some of these personal lifestyle components include adequate rest, regular exercise, good hygiene, decreased stress, and an overall healthy diet.

No one food or supplement can prevent illness but including the following nutrients in your overall eating plan may help support your immune system:

**Protein** plays a role in the body's immune system, especially for healing and recovery. Seafood, lean meat, poultry, eggs, beans and peas, soy products and unsalted nuts and seeds

**Vitamin A** helps regulate the immune system and protect against infections by keeping skin and tissues in the mouth, stomach, intestines and respiratory system healthy. Sweet potatoes, carrots, broccoli, spinach, red bell peppers, apricots, or eggs.

**Vitamin C** supports the immune system by stimulating the formation of antibodies. Tomatoes, citrus fruit, sweet peppers, broccoli, kiwi fruit, papaya, and tomato juice

**Vitamin E** works as an antioxidant to protect immune function from damage

**Zinc** helps the immune system work properly and may help wounds heal. Sunflower seeds and oil, fortified cereals, almonds, safflower oil, hazelnuts, and peanut butter

**Vitamin D** helps to regulate immune cell function. Foods fortified with Vitamin D (milk, cereal, orange juice), fatty fish, and sun exposure

**Other nutrients**, including vitamin B6, B12, copper, folate, selenium and iron also may support immune response and play a role in a healthful eating style. Zinc, Lean meat, poultry, seafood, milk, nuts, whole grain products, seeds, and nuts