

Boost Your Immune Resilience for Flu Season

Immune resilience refers to the ability of the immune system to effectively respond to and recover from challenges. Maintaining a resilient immune system is essential for combatting infections, warding off illnesses, and promoting mental and physical well-being.

Think of your immune system as your body's vigilant bodyguard, always ready to respond to potential threats. Just as a skilled bouncer steps in to restore order during a bar fight, our goal is to maintain immune resilience – the capacity to adapt, defend against pathogens, and return to a state of health after facing an assault. To enhance your immune resilience, focus on maintaining a healthy lifestyle, proper nutrition, and taking steps to minimize stress, which can help the immune system function optimally and recover more efficiently from health challenges.

Here are specific nutrition and lifestyle habits to support your immune resilience.

Nutrition 101

- **Explore a Vibrant Palette:** Introduce a diverse range of unprocessed, whole plant foods into your diet. Fruits, vegetables, and specific grains provide essential nutrients such as flavonoids (like quercetin), vitamin C, vitamin A, and vitamin D, all of which play a pivotal role in supporting immune function.
- **Embrace Healthy Fats:** Incorporate nourishing fats into your diet, known for their antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties. Nuts and seeds like Brazil nuts, sunflower seeds, and almonds supply selenium and vitamin E, bolstering immune health with their antioxidant benefits. Fish and fish oil contain compounds like EPA and DHA, which are crucial for immune function and help resolve inflammation.
- **Prioritize Quality Protein:** Opt for high-quality protein sources as they are fundamental for immune function. Protein can be sourced from animal products or through combinations of complementary plant foods like beans and rice, or lentils and quinoa.

- **Cut Down on Sugar:** Consider reducing sugar in your regular dietary choices. Minimize the consumption of sodas, fruit juices, and desserts; instead, focus on real, unprocessed foods.
- **Hydrate Effectively:** Maintain proper hydration by drinking filtered water. A good rule of thumb is to aim for about half your body weight in ounces of water each day (e.g., if you weigh 140 pounds, target 70 ounces of water daily).

Lifestyle 101:

- **Self-Care and Stress Management:** Engaging in self-care and effectively managing stress is of utmost importance during flu season. Stress, particularly stress hormones like adrenaline and cortisol, can compromise immune function. During stressful periods, your body may require more nutrients, emphasizing the significance of a diverse and unprocessed diet.
- **Sleep and Physical Activity:** Ensure you get adequate sleep, engage in regular physical activity, and allow your body to rest. These practices contribute to a sense of well-being and encourage a calm nervous system response.
- **Foster Connections:** Seek ways to connect with loved ones. Experiencing feelings of love, relaxation, and happiness can trigger the production of neuronal signaling molecules like serotonin and dopamine, which strengthen the immune system.

By following these tips, you can bolster your immune resilience and stay healthy during flu season.

