

# NUTRITION AND IMMUNE SYSTEM INFORMATION

*from our dietitians*

With the widespread news of coronavirus (COVID-19), prevention is the key to staying healthy. We know that there isn't one particular food that will keep you from getting the virus. However, the best way to keep your immune system functioning at an optimal level is adequate sleep, stress reduction, and maintaining a healthy diet. The best prevention against all bacteria and viruses is hand washing, especially before you eat!!

## WHAT TO EAT

Specific nutrients are recognized for their roles in building immunity and producing a healthy immune response. Make sure you are getting plenty of the foods listed below each day.

### VITAMIN A

Experts have long known that Vitamin A plays a role in infection and maintaining mucosal integrity of our fighter T cells, B cells, and cytokines.

#### Foods high in Vitamin A:

- carrots
- sweet potatoes
- spinach
- cantaloupe

### VITAMIN D

Insufficient levels of Vitamin D are related to a deficiency in our innate immune defenses (saliva, skin, mucus, mucus cells) that protect us from infections.

#### Items high in Vitamin D:

- sunlight
- salmon
- egg yolk

During winter, supplement with 1,000 ug per day.

### VITAMIN C

Vitamin C improves components of the immune system such as antimicrobial and natural killer cell activities.

#### Foods high in Vitamin C:

- oranges
- tomatoes
- broccoli
- strawberries
- cauliflower
- sweet potatoes

### VITAMIN E

Vitamin E is an antioxidant that neutralizes harmful free radical molecules in your body that are associated with cell damage. It also acts as an immune booster.

#### Foods high in Vitamin E:

- eggs
- peanut butter
- avocado
- spinach
- almonds
- sunflower seeds



## ZINC

Zinc helps immune cells to function as they should. Intake of zinc should be no more than 15–25 mg per day, as too much zinc can inhibit the function of the immune system.

### Foods high in Zinc:

- spinach
- broccoli
- lentils
- tofu
- shrimp
- crab
- green beans

## ADDITIONS

### Flavor with garlic

Garlic has immune-stimulating properties.

### Spice it up with ginger

High in antioxidants, ginger has antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties.

### Sip tea

Tea is one of the highest antioxidant substances on Earth. Green, oolong, and black tea offer disease fighting chemicals.

## AVOID

### Sugar

Avoid high sugar foods, as they suppress the immune system.

### Watch fat intake

Foods with a high fat content are pro-inflammatory. Also, keep your weight in check; the higher your BMI, the more compromised your immune system becomes.

Kim Trudel, MS, RD, LDN / [ktrudel@weymouthclub.com](mailto:ktrudel@weymouthclub.com)

Jane Minton, RD / [jminton@weymouthclub.com](mailto:jminton@weymouthclub.com)



[weymouthclub.com](http://weymouthclub.com)

