

Boost your immune system: 10 strategies to stay healthy during cold and flu season



Winter brings a higher risk of colds and flu, but a strong immune system can reduce this risk. **Lifestyle choices**, including getting a flu shot, enough sleep, and a healthy diet, contribute to a robust immune system. Even if you catch the flu, a strong immune system can reduce the severity and duration. In the following sections, we'll explore **ways to enhance immunity** during the cold and flu season.



1. The role of diet in boosting immunity

A balanced diet, rich in vitamins **A, B6, B12, C, D**, and minerals like **copper, folate, iron, selenium, and zinc**, is vital for immune health. Add foods including fish oil, yoghurt, portobello mushrooms, Brazil nuts, juice smoothies, and plantain to your diet for a boost. Whole foods, high in fibre, support gut health, where **70%** of the immune system resides. Including probiotic foods and a variety of nutrient-dense foods supports overall health and immunity.

2. Importance of Vitamin D

Vitamin D enhances immune defence and decreases inflammation. During winter, you can boost intake through **diet, supplements, and spending time outdoors**. Consult your doctor before taking supplements and enjoy outdoor activities to stimulate vitamin D production.

3. Energy levels and their impact on immunity

Energy levels directly correlate with immune function. Maintain high energy levels through a balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate rest, and hydration. These strategies support the **immune system's optimal functioning**.



4. Sleep as a key factor in immunity

Quality sleep is responsible for so many good things from **replenishing immune cells** and **reducing inflammation**, to **improving gut health** and our **immune systems**. Ensure quality sleep by establishing a consistent schedule, eating and drinking mindfully, and creating a restful environment.

5. Hydration and immune health

Hydration supports nutrient transportation, waste removal, and immune system function. **Stay hydrated** by drinking **at least eight glasses of water a day**, eating water-rich fruits and vegetables, and limiting caffeinated, sugary and alcoholic beverages.



6. Regular exercise and immunity

Regular exercise boosts immunity by enhancing antibodies and white blood cells. Adapt your routine to winter with **indoor workouts** or **outdoor activities** and remember to stay warm.



7. The benefits of outdoor time

Spending time outdoors stimulates the immune system and triggers vitamin D production. Incorporate outdoor activities into your daily routine, such as **walking, cycling, or outdoor workouts.**



8. Stress management for immunity boost

Chronic stress **weakens immunity**, but managing stress through regular exercise, healthy eating, adequate sleep, and socialising with friends can improve immune function.

9. Germs and your immune system

Germs can weaken the immune system, but understanding how they interact with immunity and taking **preventive measures** like flu shots, good hygiene, healthy diet, and adequate sleep can reduce the risk of getting sick.



10. Mindfulness and meditation for immune health

Mindfulness and **meditation practices** have been shown to positively impact the immune system. Engaging in daily mindfulness exercises or meditation sessions can reduce stress, enhance emotional well-being, and improve immune responses. Techniques such as **deep breathing, guided imagery**, or simply taking a few moments to **focus on the present** can be powerful tools in strengthening your immune system.

Boosting your immune system during the cold and flu season involves a multifaceted approach, including sleep, diet, exercise, hydration, outdoor time, and stress management.

Contact **HealthHero** today for more support and advice.
