

Using Nutrition to Fight the Common Cold

Flu season is upon us. Blocked noses, sore throats, awful coughs, all the unwanted things surrounding us during the colder months. How can we prevent catching a cold this season and how can we shorten the symptoms if we do get sick?

Your best chance is in the foods you eat. Getting the right nutrients through a nutritiously balanced diet can help boost your immune system and help fight off symptoms of a cold. Start filling your fridges with immunity boosting foods full of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. The more you consume these types of foods, the better your chance of having a flu free winter. Here are a few foods to be sure to include in your diet:

- Garlic - this glorious bulb which gives everyone terrible breathe is in fact very beneficial to your health. It has antibacterial properties and packs a potent punch of antioxidants. Include plenty of garlic to all your dishes over winter, just remember to brush your teeth!
- Vitamin A - helps to keep the digestive track healthy which helps provide a barrier from illness and infection. Include foods such as carrots, sweet potato and eggs.
- Vitamin C - the most common go to vitamin during the flu season. Vitamin C is needed for growth and repair in the body but also aids in stimulating the immune system. Dont just count on oranges for your vitamin C intake. Include things like broccoli, capsicums, strawberries and kiwifruits.
- Dark Leafy Greens - also high in vitamin C so include things like kale, swiss chard and spinach to your soups, casseroles or even your breakfast smoothies.
- Zinc - is important in the proper functioning of the immune system within the body. Hence its importance in the prevention of colds and flu's. Oysters have the highest zinc content, however things like beef and lamb, pumpkin seeds, cashews and even dark chocolate.
- Blueberries - Powerhouse of antioxidants. Enough said!
- Spices - such as cumin, turmeric, chilli powder, paprika and ginger are also a great addition to your winter diet. Add them to omelettes, soups, curries or sauces.
- Tea - black, green and white tea are all high in antioxidants, not to mention a delicious warming drink to enjoy during the winter. If its a sore throat that you have, try a squeeze of honey in a hot lemon and ginger tea. Soothing and yummy!

Prevention is always better than cure and they always say you are what you eat, so eat yourself healthy this winter. Stock up on lots of colourful fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, spices and tea. And of course dont forget the water. Keep yourself hydrated to ensure your body is working at its peak performance to fight off any illness. Keep healthy to prevent, or shorten, cold and flu symptoms this winter.

