

Wellness

REVIEW

Take out Insurance Against Colds and Flu this Winter

For many people the shortening days and cooler weather heralds not only the start of winter but also a string of absences from work and a backlog of tasks as you or your loved ones succumb to winter illness. What if you could take out a wellness 'insurance policy' against colds and flu, and gain back that precious time for winter sports and family fun instead of being stuck at home, rugged up and sniffing, with a box of tissues for company? This year, arm yourself with the tools you need to boost your immune function and help insure against illness.

Key Nutrients for a Strong Immune System

Remember when your mum told you to eat oranges in winter to help keep colds at bay? She was right! Citrus fruits of all kinds are rich in vitamin C, a potent antioxidant that plays a key role in the mobilisation of your immune system defences. However, vitamin C is not the only nutrient beneficial to your immune system. Zinc is another powerful immune system supporter, found in meat, eggs, seafood, nuts and seeds. Zinc helps infection-fighting white blood cells to be deployed at the first sign of a disease-causing invader, such as a virus or bacteria. These two nutrients form an essential immune system foundation to help reduce the incidence and severity of colds and infections.

Vitamin D also plays an important role in the overall function of your immune system, working behind the scenes to help 'marshal' your immune cells to the site of an infection. During winter your stores of vitamin D can decline as you spend more time indoors and less time soaking up the sunshine required to manufacture your own supply. At this time of year supplementing with this important vitamin can help maintain your infection-fighting capacity over the winter months. Your Practitioner can recommend high quality, clinically effective immune-boosting nutrients at the correct dose to help you stay well this winter.

Looking After Your Gut = Looking After Your Immunity

Believe it or not, your gastrointestinal tract contains approximately 70% of your immune system, so ensuring your gut is populated with plenty of beneficial micro-organisms ('good bugs') is central to you maintaining optimal immune function. These beneficial bacteria or 'probiotics' are now understood to have very different health benefits depending upon their subset or 'strain', with certain specific strains able to support your immune system and help keep it in top form. Supplementing with *Lactobacillus acidophilus* (NCFM strain) and *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* (LGG and HN019 strains) in particular can reduce the incidence of respiratory infections that are common in winter. Speak with your Practitioner about supporting your gut with specific immune-boosting probiotics.

Simple Lifestyle Tips to Support Good Health this Winter

Busy people often forget to prioritise regular 'down-time', but the stress of being on the go all the time can significantly drain your immune function and leave you more susceptible to falling prey to any viruses you may come in contact with. Help yourself recharge by scheduling regular relaxation and 'me time' such as reading a good book, getting a massage, or perhaps a yoga class followed by a long soak in a warm bath. Ensuring you get sufficient sleep also enables your body to rest and repair, keeping you ready to fight whatever battles you may encounter tomorrow.



A Penny of Prevention is Worth a Pound of Cure

Rather than succumbing to yet another cold or flu this winter, change tack and take out a wellness 'insurance policy' to help support your immune system and keep you enjoying what the winter season has to offer. Speak to your Practitioner today about boosting your infection-fighting capacity with high quality, clinically effective vitamin C, zinc, vitamin D and immune-boosting probiotics. Remember — prevention is always better than cure!

Talk to your Practitioner about how you can prevent winter illness this cold and flu season.