

# STAYING HEALTHY *NATURALLY*

**DURING COLD AND FLU SEASON**



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# Staying Healthy Naturally During Cold and Flu Season

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## Staying Healthy Naturally During Cold and Flu Season

According to the experts, we have another cold winter approaching. Most of us are still shell-shocked after last year's frigid weather. Adding insult to injury is the fact that the cold weather drives us indoors (where we are in closer contact), we crank up the heat (drying out our nasal passages, making them more prone to infection), and our vitamin D exposure plummets (D is extremely immune-supportive). Next come the holidays, where we stress our systems (parties, alcohol, less sleep, more sugar, last minute chaos).

Before you throw in the towel and stock up on cough syrup and cold medicines, learn how to stay healthy with the following proven methods.







## Vitamin D

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Vitamin D supports a very important component of our immune system known as sIgA which acts like an antiseptic paint that coats our mouth, throat, sinuses, respiratory, gastrointestinal and urinary tracts. It is interesting to note that 5 minutes of stress has been proven to lower sIgA for up to 7 hours!

During the last decade, basic scientific research has demonstrated that low vitamin D levels (often linked to lower sun exposure) are associated with an increased susceptibility to upper respiratory infection. Vitamin-D deficiency is very common in asthmatic children and is associated with more severe breathing impairment. **A recent study published in an allergy and immunology journal found that Vitamin D deficiency was the strongest predictor of asthma and revealed that the majority of asthmatic children had vitamin D deficiency compared to non-asthmatic children.**

My best estimation, based upon the literature, of what is truly optimal is 60-80 ng/mL. Most people have suboptimal D (unless they are taking 2,000 - 4,000 IU per day or daily sun exposure), and when they become depleted this winter, they will be vulnerable to infections.

## Vitamin C

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Multiple studies have found that high doses of vitamin C alleviate common cold and flu symptoms, indicating that the vitamin does indeed have physiologic effects on colds.

From a meta (in depth)-analysis of four double-blind, placebo-controlled trials, Dr Linus Pauling found a 45% decrease in the incidence of colds when 1000 mg. of ascorbic acid (vitamin C) was used daily.

A review of the studies linking the effect of vitamin C on upper respiratory infections found that vitamin C also was protective against common cold-induced asthma attacks and bronchial (airway) hypersensitivity.

Don't rely on orange juice, since its high sugar content offsets much of the positive impact of the vitamin. Instead, vegetable juices and broths are much better options.

## Selenium and Zinc

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Low selenium status increases susceptibility to infection as well as the severity of the illness. **Animal studies have proven that mice deficient in selenium were more susceptible to both coxsackie as well as influenza viral infections and developed more severe complications, i.e. pneumonia.**

Oral zinc is associated with a reduced duration of the common cold, which was once again reiterated in a study published in 2014 in JAMA and this effect is more apparent in children.

## Garlic

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The active component, allicin, has a wide spectrum of antifungal, antibacterial, and antiviral properties. A recent article published in the journal Clinical Nutrition examined the effects of a garlic extract on 120 healthy individuals and found that **after 45 days of taking the supplement, those taking the garlic had missed 58% fewer days of work and those who did come down with the flu had milder symptoms and got better faster.**



## Propolis

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This is made by bees from a combination of tree sap and honey. Bees use propolis to protect their hives, as a barrier against external invaders.

Current antimicrobial applications of propolis include formulations for upper respiratory tract infections, wound healing, gingivitis, canker sores, treatment of burns, acne and herpes simplex (cold sores). **School-aged kids who were given propolis during flu season reported a lower incidence of cases and reduced acute and chronic symptoms.**

Studies have shown that bee propolis has an **inhibitory effect on the growth and adherence of strep bacteria and that propolis has antiviral, anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory properties.**

Warning: Honey should NEVER be given to infants and toddlers; there is a significant risk of potentially fatal botulism.

## Beta Glucans

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Derived from cereal grains, baker's yeast and mushrooms and due to their potent immune benefits, are considered superfood components.

Strenuous exercise, such as running a marathon, is known to suppress a very protective part of our respiratory immune system known as sIgA, making athletes more prone to infection. While many dietary interventions have been used to combat post-exercise immune suppression, most have been ineffective, until now. **Those given beta glucan mushroom extract had a 37% reduction in the number of cold/flu symptom days postmarathon. SIgA levels were also significantly higher in the beta glucan group, illustrating improved immune function in the supplemented athletes.**

A review of clinical trials with beta glucan in children who suffer from chronic respiratory infections revealed a significant improvement in immune function in the treatment group.

## Probiotics

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Probiotics are living microorganisms known as "friendly" bacteria. The human gastrointestinal (GI) tract hosts more than 100 trillion bacteria!

The GI tract is sterile at birth and bacteria are introduced directly from the mother during delivery.

Studies have proven that these beneficial bacteria, taken orally, can prevent infection due to the positive impact they have on our gastrointestinal (GI) system).

More than 75% of our immune cells are located in our guts, so improving GI health is one of the best ways to support immunity. They also stimulate immune responses in the respiratory tracts.

The human gastrointestinal (GI) tract hosts more than 100 trillion bacteria!

Imbalances of GI bacteria are directly linked to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis), susceptibility to infection, and even obesity and diabetes. Therefore, an important feature of any wellness program is to support a healthy bacterial population throughout the GI system. We can work towards this goal by using probiotics.



### **Some Of The Many Benefits Associated With Probiotics**

- Protect against invasion by unwanted GI bacteria and yeast
- Assist in detoxification by the liver
- Support digestion and absorption of nutrients
- Combat diarrhea
- Assist with lactose digestion
- Exert anti-cancer effects
- Improve immune resistance
- Help reduce leakiness of the gut to discourage food intolerance/allergy

### **What To Look For In Probiotics And How To Get The Most Benefit From Them**

- We ideally want a combination of Lactobacillus and Bifidobacterium species.
- Consume probiotics with moderate amounts of food no warmer than room temperature.
- Purchase refrigerated brands: Industry and consumer studies have found that 30 to 50% of probiotic products available in retail stores contain significantly less viable microorganisms than claimed on their labels.
- Always use along with antibiotics, but take at least 2 hours away from the antibiotic, and use for at least 2 weeks after discontinuing antibiotic treatment.
- The bottle should indicate that the contents contain live cultures.

### **Food Sources of Probiotics**

- Kefir is a fermented milk product that contains healthy probiotic bacteria and has proteins that are more easily digestible than many other dairy products. It has been proven to help with lactose digestion, so can be a good option for those with lactose intolerance. Certain components of kefir may be helpful in regulating immune function, warding off allergies and reducing inflammation.
- Yogurt
- Fermented foods: Sauerkraut, kimchi, miso, tempeh
- Kombucha: Kombucha tea is produced by fermenting sweet black tea with a flat culture of bacteria and yeasts known as the kombucha mushroom.

## Potential Side Effects of Probiotics

- Gas and bloating, which is usually mild and will typically resolve after your body adjusts.
- Those on chemotherapy should check with their doctor first, since very low white blood counts can be a contraindication to using probiotics.

## Melatonin

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In addition to melatonin's role in promoting sleep and circadian rhythm, it has also been found to be effective in fighting bacterial and viral infections.

### **The following was the conclusion of a published melatonin study:**

"The immunomodulatory, antioxidant, and neuroprotective effects of melatonin suggest that this must be considered as an additional therapeutic alternative to fight viral diseases."

It's best to take melatonin about 30 minutes before bedtime and be sure you leave yourself enough time for a good night's sleep, at least 7 hours.

## Echinacea

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In a study published in the Journal: Antiviral Research, it was concluded that "**echinacea can alleviate cold and flu symptoms and possibly other respiratory diseases, by inhibiting viral growth and the secretion of pro-inflammatory chemicals.**" Many combination immune-support formulas contain this herb.

## Sambucus Nigra, a.k.a. Black Elderberry

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Multiple studies have shown that people with influenza who supplemented with Elderberry experienced symptomatic improvement on average, in 2 days, whereas recovery took at least 6 days in the control groups.

There are kid friendly versions of Sambucol.

Here's an interesting study: *Phytochemistry*. 2009 Jul;70(10):1255-61.

Elderberry flavonoids bind to and prevent H1N1 infection in vitro. **The H1N1 inhibition activities of the elderberry flavonoids compare favorably to the known anti-influenza activities of Oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and Amantadine.**

## Zinc Lozenges

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A number of published studies show that if zinc lozenges are taken within 24 hours of the onset of common cold symptoms, the severity and duration of cold miseries are significantly diminished.



Rhino(cold) viruses attach to specific receptor sites in our sinus and throat tissues, become lodged in the nose and throat, and then multiply out of control. By binding to the same cell receptor sites as do cold viruses, zinc inhibits the ability of rhinoviruses to take hold in the body.

An analysis of all the published literature on zinc lozenges was conducted recently. The following was the conclusion of the report:

“Clinical trial data support the value of zinc in reducing the duration and severity of symptoms of the common cold when administered within 24 hours of the onset of common cold symptoms.”

The key here is to suck on two 24-mg zinc lozenges at the very first symptoms of a cold. Once rhinoviruses bind to their receptor sites in the nasal tissues and begin replicating, zinc lozenges lose their efficacy. Considering how inexpensive zinc lozenges are, it makes sense to keep them on hand so that they are immediately available if cold symptoms manifest.

One caveat to remember is that chronic use of zinc in doses over 100 mg/day may suppress immune function. This is for short-term use only.

## **N Acetyl Cysteine (NAC)**

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NAC has been nicknamed: birth control for viruses. It helps build levels of a very potent antiviral in the body, known as glutathione.

In a study of 24 patients with chronic bronchitis and positive bacterial culture in the sputum, the addition of twice daily 600 mg NAC to standard antibiotic therapy doubled the eradication of the infection. NAC has also been proven to inhibit multiplication of influenza A viruses.

## **Last But Not Least, Lactoferrin**

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It is well-known that infants obtain protection against infections from components contained in breast milk (colostrums). One such component is lactoferrin, which has well-documented immune-stimulating effects.

**Lactoferrin may boost natural killer cell activity and is effective at fighting viruses.**

A study published in 2013 examined 126 participants who were randomly assigned to receive 600 mg of lactoferrin or a placebo daily for 90 days. **The total number of colds recorded over the study period was 48 for the treatment group versus 112 for the placebo group.**

Lactoferrin is a component of whey and has **antiviral, antifungal, antibacterial, anticancer, and immune-enhancing effects.**

Lactoferrin is concentrated in the saliva, where it comes into direct contact with infections and kills or suppresses them through a variety of mechanisms.

A tasty way to incorporate this into your diet is with a lactoferrin powder for smoothies.

Transfer Factor: **This is a colostrum immune formula that is very popular, even for use in children.**

## How To Get The Benefits Without Taking A Lot Of Pills

There are combination formulas with several of the ingredients in one product.

Mix and match the following in your smoothies:

- high lactoferrin protein powder
- garlic
- kale
- 1-2 tbs. organic Greek yogurt (for probiotic support)
- a tsp. of pure, unprocessed honey
- Brazil nuts (great source of selenium)
- an organic citrus fruit (high in vitamin C)





# RECIPES

FOR COLD AND FLU SEASON



## Cauliflower “Rice” Recipe

Cauliflower “Rice” is a low-carb, high-fiber and nutrient-dense substitute for rice.

### Ingredients:

3 tbs olive oil  
1 medium onion, finely chopped (about 1 cup)  
4 stalks celery, finely chopped (about 1 cup)  
1 large head of cauliflower, trimmed and coarsely chopped  
¼ tsp sea salt

### Directions:

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat.  
Saute the onion for 8-10 minutes, until soft and translucent.  
Add the celery and sauté for 5 minutes.  
In a food processor, pulse the cauliflower until it is the texture of rice.  
Add the cauliflower to the skillet, cover, and cook for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until soft. Stir in the salt and serve.

## Vegetable Beef Soup

### Ingredients:

4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
1 pound lean grass fed steak, trimmed and cut into 1 ¼ cubes  
½ large onion, finely chopped  
1 rib celery, finely chopped  
4 large carrots, diced  
1 bag frozen peas  
8 cups beef or vegetable broth (without MSG)  
1 large kale, chopped  
1 large sweet potato, cut into pieces  
1 can (16 ounce) chopped tomatoes  
Ground black pepper

### Directions:

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large saucepan over medium—high heat. Brown the beef in a separate pan and cook, turning occasionally, for 8 minutes, or until browned on all sides. Remove to a large bowl lined with paper towels.  
Heat the oil in a soup pot over medium heat. Add the celery, onion, and peas, carrots, sweet potato and cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes, or until the onions are translucent. Add the steak, water, kale, tomatoes (with juice) and pepper to taste.  
Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring frequently. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally for 1 ½ hours or until the steak is fork tender.

## Quick Chicken Soup

### Ingredients:

3 cups cooked chicken, diced  
3 carrots, chopped  
1 cup celery, chopped  
1 small onion, diced  
1 small sweet potato, cut into pieces  
6 cups chicken broth (No MSG)  
Spice to flavor

### Directions:

Coat the bottom of the pot with a thin layer of olive oil. Saute the carrots, onion, celery and sweet potato until the onions appear translucent. Add the broth and chicken and bring to a boil. Lower heat, simmer and cover until the sweet potato has softened. Enjoy.





# SMOOTHIES

An easy, nutritious, and delicious way to boost your nutrition intake daily. Here are some smoothie basics and fun recipes.

## How To Assemble The Perfect Smoothie

### Grass Fed Whey Protein

Starting the day off with protein helps you avoid the blood sugar roller coaster that leads to sugar cravings, fatigue and weight gain. Whey is a tremendously bioavailable protein, meaning that it is easy for your body to absorb and your muscles to efficiently utilize.

Look for one that is derived from grass-fed cows, free of growth hormone, to avoid pesticides and toxins. Avoid artificial sweeteners such as aspartame, sucralose, etc. Stevia and natural sweeteners are acceptable.

Subtract the carbs from the fiber and the total should be 6g or less.

Pea Protein: This is a good option for those who are sensitive to whey (dairy) protein.

Rice Protein: This is used in many detoxification and hypoallergenic protein powders.

Egg Protein: A substitute for whey and a complete protein.

Soy: Make sure it is non-GMO and avoid if you have a thyroid disorder.



## Fruits For Smoothies

One cup fresh or frozen organic raspberries, blackberries and strawberries is loaded with fiber! Blueberries are a bit more watery, but you can mix about 75% raspberries or strawberries with 25% blueberries. **The darker berries are excellent sources of antioxidants.** Mango, apple and pineapple are strong tasting, so are good for “masking” some powders. Bananas are high-glycemic so if you choose them, just use half.

## Healthy Fats For Smoothies

Ground flaxseeds provide a source of fiber and phytoestrogens that also favorably impact hormone ratios. A bit of sesame oil is nice for those who prefer a spicy flavor. Chia seeds are also a potent fiber source. Almond or peanut butter adds flavor and thickness. If you need it to keep you satiated longer, add the nut butter. Coconut has immune-supporting and anti-fungal properties-try some sulfite-free shredded coconut.

## Milk Options For Smoothies

- Almond Milk – Unsweetened, chocolate or vanilla
- Coconut Milk -Also offered as flavored and unsweetened
- Flax Milk – unsweetened
- Hemp Milk – unsweetened
- Cow Milk – derived from organic, grass-fed cows

## Extra Nutrition Boosters For Smoothies

- At least one tsp of cinnamon powder (organic and non-irradiated). Has a nice flavor and has wonderful effects on blood sugar levels.
- A handful of fresh greens: spinach and kale blend well and don't impact flavor very strongly.
- A nice splurge of organic vanilla powder (or 1/8 pod of vanilla).
- A bit of finely grated organic lemon, lime, ginger, turmeric, thyme.
- A tbs. of MCT oil (derived from coconut) for those who need a lot of energy and/or immune support (athletes, cancer patients, Skinny Minnies), or those who have problems with their GI tracts, such as Candida (yeast) overgrowth.
- With kids or people who need to take a lot of supplements, you can open many of these and add them to the shake.

## Some Additional Pointers

- Regarding consistency, you have a choice between making a sorbet (soft ice-cream like concoction), or a shake. If you add less milk and more fruit/fats/fiber, it will be thicker.
- When making smoothies with greens, adding fresh lemon juice will preserve the smoothie and keep it fresh for 24 hours.
- If you are avoiding citrus, a tart Granny Smith apple and fresh or frozen cranberries in your green smoothies will add the tart flavor normally provided by the lemon.
- If your green smoothie tastes too bitter, add one or two pitted dates or a pear.
- In the summer, adding frozen fruit and coconut water makes for a simple, refreshing smoothie.
- Leftover smoothies can be stored in glass jars in the fridge.

## My Favorite Smoothie Recipes

Here are my favorite smoothie combinations. Remember, you can add more liquid if you like a thinner consistency.

### Berry Almond

1-1.5 cups almond milk  
¾ cup mixed berries  
1 tbs. almond butter  
1 scoop protein powder

### Tropical

1-1.5 cup coconut milk  
½ frozen banana  
½ cup frozen pineapple  
or mango  
1 tbs. macadamia nut butter  
a sprinkle of nutmeg  
1 scoop protein powder

### Autumn Spice

1-1.5 cup almond or hemp milk  
small apple  
½ cup pumpkin puree  
2 tbs. walnuts  
a sprinkle of Allspice  
1 scoop protein powder

### Blueberry Mint

1-1.5 cup milk  
¾ cup blueberries  
½ cup watercress  
1 tbs. cashew butter  
8 leaves of finely chopped mint  
1 scoop protein powder

### Pumpkin Orange

1-1.5 cup milk, ½ cup orange slices, ½ cup pumpkin puree, 1 tbs. almond butter, a sprinkle of dried cloves, 1 scoop protein powder

