

The Wellness Family

Dr. Gerken Keeps You Informed

A Natural Approach to Boosting Immunity

With the weather turning colder, your family will be spending less time outside and more time inside with the heater running. Your body's natural immunity against common illnesses will be put to the test now more than ever and it's no wonder that this is the time of year when you and your children are most likely to come down with a cold or the flu.

What is Immunity?

Immunity is defined as having resistance to infection or a specific disease; and your immune system is the network within your body that recognizes and destroys invading or foreign bacteria, viruses and germs.

The immune system is like no other bodily system, as it is not just one organ but an interaction between many organs, structures and substances within the body. Your immune system has the task of patrolling and protecting the body, and does this using white blood cells, bone marrow, the lymphatic system, specialized cells and body tissues, and specialized substances that are present in the blood. All of these components must work together to protect the body against viral or bacterial infections and disease.

Immunity Status

It's not difficult to tell when your immune system is being overly taxed; one of the first symptoms is going to be fatigue. Other symptoms to look for include:

- Chronic infections
- Frequent colds and flu
- Frequent cold sores
- Sore or swollen lymph glands

A poorly functioning immune system can be caused by many factors. These can include any of the following:

- Emotional state/stress
- Abrupt lifestyle changes
- Dietary habits/nutritional intake
- Surgical/medical treatments
- Prescription medications

When your immune system is not functioning at its best, any exposure to germs, bacterial or viral infections can lead to a serious health risk.

Herbal Remedies

The most popular natural remedy for boosting the immune system is the herbal supplement. These are Mother Nature's cure for a poorly functioning or over-taxed immune system.

- Astragalus Root is used to treat viral infections including the common cold. It helps to stimulate white blood cells and protects from invading organisms. Additionally, it enhances the production of an important natural compound produced by the body to fight viruses known as interferon



"You can naturally boost your immunity with regular Chiropractic adjustments."

- Bayberry has antibiotic effects for sore throat, coughs, colds and the flu
- Garlic is effective against many types of bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi, as well as having anti-inflammatory and astringent properties
- Ashwagandha is a general stimulant of the immune system; this herb is known to counteract the effects of stress and promote general well-being
- Ginseng is popularly known to provide support to the immune system
- Goldenseal strengthens the immune system, cleanses and detoxifies the body, and has antibacterial properties
- Echinacea is an herb that will help to stimulate a variety of immune cells

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- Green tea can stimulate the immune system
- Gargling or steaming with Apple Cider Vinegar and water has proven health benefits

Dietary Changes

Another wise approach to boosting your immunity naturally is to consider your diet and nutritional intake. What you consume daily can either improve or weaken your immune system.

To strengthen your immune system, increase:

- Fruits, beans, seeds, whole grains and nuts
- Vegetables high in carotenes such as: yellow and orange squash, dark greens, carrots, yams, sweet potatoes, red peppers and tomatoes
- Leafy green vegetables such as: cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, etc.
- Healthy protein (fish, chicken, etc.)
- Red wine and other antioxidant rich foods

Avoiding the following will also help to give your immune system a boost:

- Red meat
- Refined sugars and bleached or enriched flour
- Dairy (specifically milk)

Other Tips and Recommendations

To help support your immune system and keep it operating at peak efficiency, consider the following healthy lifestyle choices for you and your family:

- Increase your water intake: you should be drinking at least 8-10 glasses of water per day to boost the immune system and flush out toxins
- Exercise regularly: daily physical activity for 30 minutes a day will improve your overall health and give your immune system the boost it needs
- De-stress: be sure to include regular relaxation and down-time into your weekly schedule as stress will quickly wear down your body's natural defenses

The Chiropractic Factor

Your immune system is a bodily system and, as such, is controlled by your central nervous system. When your spine is out of alignment or subluxated, your nervous system suffers and this will affect all of your body's natural systems, including your immune system.

Your Doctor of Chiropractic is the only healthcare professional dedicated to the understanding that a properly functioning central nervous system will improve your and your family's overall health. Many patients report an improvement in their family's quality of life after beginning wellness Chiropractic care.

For more information please visit:

www.icpa4kids.org/links/family.htm

www.mothing.com

www.wholefoods.com

www.naturalhealthnewsletters.com

This information is solely for informational and educational purposes and is not intended to provide or replace necessary medical advice.

Dear Parent,

Dr. Gerken is dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. Take a moment today to ask your Family Wellness Chiropractor any questions you may have regarding your family's overall health and wellness.

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