

Winter Wellness: 6 Tips to Guard Against Colds and Flu

Whether you enjoy spending time outside in fresh snow and cold winter temperatures or you prefer to hop on a plane and escape to a warmer climate, it's essential to prioritize your immune health during the winter. Doing so will help guard against colds, flu, and upper respiratory viruses so you can make the most of the season.

Learn six easy ways to support and strengthen your immune system to fight off winter viruses lurking around every corner.

1. Get Your Vitamins

No single nutrient can boost immune health. Instead, a healthy immune system relies on various nutrients, including vitamins, minerals, protein, fat, and carbohydrates, that work synergistically. These provide the building blocks for immune cells, antibodies, and hormones, as well as the energy required to activate a healthy immune response where and when needed.

Immune support starts with a balanced diet that provides:

- Vitamins and minerals from fruits and vegetables
- Protein from lean meats, poultry, fish, and tofu
- Healthy fats from nuts, seeds, olive oil, and oily fish
- Complex carbohydrates from beans (legumes) and whole grains such as oats, whole wheat, quinoa, and brown or wild rice

Everyone occasionally has gaps in their diet, but taking a broad-spectrum [multivitamin and mineral supplement](#) can help close those gaps. It can also cover your extra need for vital nutrients like vitamin C, which can be depleted with stress, and vitamin D, which primarily comes from sunlight exposure on your skin and is hard to get enough of from diet alone.

2. Boost Botanicals

Botanicals, plants with therapeutic properties, have been used in traditional medicine to support immune health for thousands of years. Many plants contain compounds with antiviral, antibacterial, and immune-stimulating properties. Some with solid evidence include:^{1,2}

- Astragalus
- Echinacea
- Green tea
- Curcumin (the active compound in turmeric)
- Licorice root
- Elderberry
- Ginseng

- Ginger

A high-quality supplement like [ViraThera™ CF](#) ensures you'll get standardized amounts of the active botanical compounds you need.

3. Stay Hydrated

You may not sweat as much in cold weather, but winter's dry air requires extra fluids. Drinking more helps moisten mucus membranes in your nose, throat, and eyes, forming a barrier against pathogens. Fluid is also vital for transporting nutrients and immune cells through your bloodstream and removing toxins and wastes from your body.

Plain water is ideal for hydration, but unsweetened green, black, and herbal tea, flavored seltzer, or high-water fruits and vegetables such as melons, grapes, and cucumbers are also excellent fluid sources. Most people need about 64 ounces of fluid daily.

4. Get Plenty of Rest

Sleep deprivation negatively affects immune system function. It also increases pro-inflammatory compounds, which can further stress your immune system. Studies have linked sleep deprivation to an increased risk of colds, flu, stomach virus, and other infectious diseases. On the other hand, sleep helps speed recovery during an illness.³

Adults need seven to nine hours of quality sleep each night, and young children (toddlers and preschoolers) require as much as 14 hours of sleep, including naps. Ensure everyone in the family prioritizes sleep, especially during the winter when the risk of viruses and infections is higher.

5. Nourish Your Gut

Scientists believe 70-80% of your immune cells are in your gut.⁴ Your digestive tract is also home to trillions of bacteria and other microbes, collectively known as the gut microbiota. Beneficial microbes play a crucial role in immune health by inhibiting the growth and spread of potentially harmful microbes. They also help maintain and strengthen intestinal barrier function, and certain bacteria species produce metabolites that reduce inflammation. All these actions promote normal immune function.

Supporting gut health with a high-fiber, plant-forward diet and a broad-spectrum probiotic such as [TherBiotic® Complete](#), may offer additional protection from winter infections.

6. Don't Overlook Postbiotics

Postbiotics are closely related to prebiotics and probiotics, and they have gained significant attention lately as another important way to support gut and immune health. Postbiotics are the bioactive metabolites formed by probiotics when they digest prebiotic fiber. They are produced naturally in a healthy gut, but you may wish to have extra support from a supplement during cold and flu season.

[Ther-Biotic Postbiotic®](#) is powered by EpiCor®, a postbiotic derived from *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, a naturally occurring yeast that is fermented and dried. With 15 published studies (eight human clinical trials and seven pre-clinical studies), EpiCor® postbiotic has been shown to help the immune system fight colds, flu, and allergies and support digestive health. ^{5,6,7}

Whether you love every minute of winter or can't wait for spring, the season is better when you are healthy. These winter wellness tips can go a long way toward better health and wellness this season.

References

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