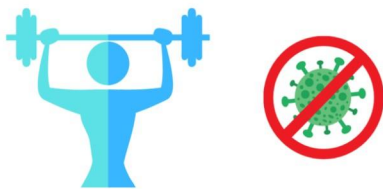


BOOSTING IMMUNITY THROUGH HEALTHY LIFESTYLE



Immunity is the ability to defend against infection and disease. There are many lifestyle factors that can influence immunity and the risk of infection.

Does Exercise Improve Your Immune System?



Evidence suggests that regular moderate activity is particularly beneficial for immune enhancement and reducing the risk of infection. Available evidence does suggest that it may act as an effective adjuvant to vaccination. Anti-inflammatory effects of exercise may occur independently of weight loss.

One of the most pragmatic "interventions" (and possibly the simplest strategy in some respects) to benefit immunity and reduce infection risk is to consume a healthy and balanced diet.



A deficiency of certain micronutrients (eg, iron, zinc, vitamin A) can have negative effects on immune function. Beneficial effects have been observed for some antioxidants (such as vitamins C and E). There is now considerable evidence that suboptimal vitamin D status is associated with compromised immunity and increased illness risk. Low vitamin D status is in fact a marker of compromised immune defense rather than the cause.

The most pragmatic nutritional recommendation may be to ensure the diet is healthy with a good variety of fruits and vegetables to ensure adequate intake of all essential nutrients while being unlikely to overconsume any single nutrient.



The "immune" or "cold and flu" section of many health food shops are often littered with a vast array of supplements and products with claims that they enhance immunity. Unfortunately, the evidence for many of these is scant, if existent at all.



Excess nutrient intake has been suggested to induce immune dysregulation. Obesity is associated with a state of chronic low-grade inflammation and a greater risk of developing infections, particularly those of the respiratory tract.

Immune-Stress Vicious Cycle



Chronic stress can suppress protective immune responses. Chronic stress may also increase susceptibility to some types of cancer by suppressing Type 1 cytokines and protective T cells and increasing regulatory/suppressor T cell function. Practice stress reduction techniques on a regular basis to boost immunity.



If you don't get enough sleep it can affect your immune system. Fact or fiction.....Fact. In one of the studies, those who got enough sleep had 3-5 x more chances of beating infection.



Time spent in nature can lower the stress hormone level. It also increases the number and activity of natural killer cells. One of the ways our body fights cancer.

Resources:

- American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine.
- National Library of Medicine