



TOP 25 IMMUNE-BOOSTING AND EASY-TO-ACCESS *Natural Medicines*

NATURE'S REMEDIES FOR KEEPING YOU HEALTHY



TOP 25 IMMUNE-BOOSTING & EASY-TO-ACCESS NATURAL MEDICINES

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INTRODUCTION

The Enemy Within (Until top-notch condition)

It would not be exaggerated to say that we are living in a sea of organisms. Viruses, bacteria, parasites, fungi, and many other types of microscopic life forms inhabit our surroundings. They cover our skin, occupy our gut, reside in our nose; but most of them have no intention of harming us.

Yet, many of these organisms are constantly trying to invade our bodies, feeding on every single cell, and sucking the life from our bodies, bit by bit. Amidst this extremely complex and challenging environment, it is the job of our immune system to protect us and keep us healthy.

Identifying the Body Cells: Self vs. Non-Self

It is a common misconception that our immune system goes to war with every foreign intruder it encounters. That would cause a massive overreaction. The actual functions of the immune system are monitoring, assessing, and judging all potential threats. Ideally, it would cooperate with the billions of microbes with which it naturally shares our bodies.

But if the immune system perceives any organism as a threat, it has a narrow job: to remove the threat with minimal collateral damage.

Your immune system keeps track of your self cells. Those are the cells that are supposed to be there.

It also recognizes non-self cells because they contain antigens, which can include harmful substances like germs, or foreign particles like splinters. Your immune system immediately tries to fight these intruders by initiating an immune response. That's when various white blood cells team up to fight the invaders.

Your immune system produces inflammation as a defense mechanism.

Inflammation then triggers an outburst of molecules and cells with the aim of clearing the threat from your body. The location of the threat can mimic the site of a multi-car crash with the immune cells leading the rescue team that rush in to monitor the problem, contain it, clean it, and stimulate tissue regrowth.

Immune System Response: Friend or Foe?

To us, inflammation can be anything; from a stuffy nose, to a fever to a simple headache or tummy ache. The symptoms of an immune response are uncomfortable and unpleasant. So, the key to life-long well being and good health is to ensure our immune system performs optimally.

According to the National Institutes of Health, more than 23.5 million or 7% of U.S. citizens suffer from an autoimmune disease.[1] Another 4.2% have a compromised immune system. And what's worse, is that these numbers are constantly on the rise.[2]

So stop for a moment and think: when was the last time you actually thought about your immune system and the things it does for your body? It has been working silently and tirelessly for many years, preventing infections and ensuring that any harmful agent does not destroy our bodies. It obviously does a lot for us, so when are we going to pay it back? When are we going to pay our gratitude to these soldiers that are on-duty round the clock?

Now is the time!

Cooling the Fires with Nature

This eBook focuses on 25 immune-boosting natural medicines, recommended by medical experts and backed by solid scientific evidence. These natural booster foods provide nutrients that are essential to the immune system — which, in turn, is crucial for maintaining good health.

As such, the immune system will easily absorb all the healthy nutrients to keep itself in top-notch condition.

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1. GINGER

As kids, almost all of us grew up with the idea that the key to good health means going natural. And when it comes to being natural, ginger is something that instantly comes to mind. This super spice has always been the perfect natural remedy for many seasonal ailments like fever, flu, cough, and cold.

On top of being an aromatic spice that's indispensable to cuisines around the world, ginger also has numerous medicinal benefits. Not only does it treat seasonal infections, but it is also a great natural immune supporter. The immune-boosting properties of ginger are primarily due to multiple anti-inflammatory compounds — including antioxidants — which protect the human body from damage caused by unstable molecules and free radicals.

Ginger contains gingerols, sesquiterpenes, paradols, zingerones, and shogaols, which possess strong antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties to boost the immune system and safeguard the body. [3] [4]

Multiple animal and test-tube studies have shown that ginger extracts can help manage autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis and improve the function of the immune system. [5]



TIPS:

- Fresh ginger is readily available in the produce section of any grocery store. Just look for a few inches long root with a beige hue.
- Grate some fresh ginger and add it to boiling water. Let it simmer for a few minutes. Strain it, and enjoy your homemade ginger tea at home.
- Add small pieces of ginger to your stir-fry for a delicious taste and aroma and of course, a much-needed immune boost. Note that cooking mellows the taste.
- And, of course, ginger is perfect for baking fresh ginger cookies, muffins, and cake — not to mention making a gingerbread house for the holidays.

2. TURMERIC

Turmeric is no longer limited to providing a delicious kick to your next meal. It is a natural spice packed with an anti-inflammatory ingredient called curcumin; the same compound that gives turmeric its signature yellow-orange hue. According to research, curcumin stimulates the production of T-cells, the main immune cells that fight diseases. [6]

Even at very low doses, curcumin can greatly improve the response of antibodies — small chemical bodies that the immune system produces to fight foreign pathogens and destroy them. This demonstrates the potential of turmeric to regulate the immune system.

Traditional Indian (Ayurvedic) and Chinese medicine practitioners have been using turmeric as a natural medicine for thousands of years. Modern-day researchers have spent decades verifying our ancestors' claims about turmeric. Thanks to these continuous efforts, we now know that curcumin contains anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral properties. Newer studies have also confirmed that turmeric can also act as a strong antioxidant, which greatly boosts immunity. [7]

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TIPS:

- If you are new to using turmeric, add a pinch of turmeric to your favorite omelette or frittatas to enjoy its flavor subtly
- The peppery and slightly warm flavor of turmeric works especially well if you add them while roasting vegetables like root veggies, potatoes, and cauliflower
- Tinge your bowl of soup with a hint of golden turmeric to make it feel more warming
- Enjoy a delicious cup of turmeric and ginger tea

3. ORANGES

Who doesn't love to refresh their taste buds with a refreshing, juicy orange? In addition to being extremely delicious and tasty, oranges are also an important immune booster. They can help support the immune system via a variety of nutrients and minerals, which are briefly explained below:

Vitamin C

Vitamin C has been strongly associated with a healthier immune system, and it's abundantly found in oranges. This vitamin protects and promotes the synthesis and functions of immune cells. And it prevents diseases like the common cold and flu, and cuts down their severity and duration. [8]

Vitamin D

Vitamin D has an important role in the regulation of immune responses.[9] It aids the immune cells in their fight against viruses and bacteria, which may otherwise lead to the progression of several potentially deadly diseases.

TIPS:

- Thinking of making a fruit salad? Don't forget to put oranges in it
- If you are bored of your plain orange juice, add in some lemon juice and fresh slices of lemon and orange for an exciting(and healthy) twist
- Stack up the peeled orange wedges on small wooden sticks, dip them in some melted dark chocolate and enjoy your own fruit kebabs



4. WATER

The fact that 70% of the human body consists of water pretty much explains the importance of water for maintaining immunity. Water helps oxygenate the blood that, in turn, pumps up the cells and aids them in working at full capacity. As a result, we get healthy, happy cells loaded with oxygen that help us feel our best and allow our bodies to enjoy a greater immunity to germs.

Thanks to adequate hydration, the well-oxygenated blood circulating in our bodies also optimizes the functioning of our organs. The kidneys can arguably be the best example of this. The more water we drink, the better our kidneys work in expelling the toxins through urination. With a decreased toxin load in the body, our immune system automatically becomes more efficient.

Similarly, regular hydration also regulates the production of melatonin — a hormone that helps us sleep. Not getting enough sleep can be a real blow to the immune system, and drinking enough water can easily help with this.

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Another way that water boosts immunity is through the production of lymph. Lymph is a fluid that runs through the human body and has a very simple task: collect bacteria from all over the body and transfer them to lymph nodes where they are destroyed. The more water you consume, the more lymph your body will generate, increasing the efficiency of lymph nodes. [10]

In addition to all the benefits mentioned above, water also protects our body by helping to keep germs out. The more water we drink, the more moisture our eyes and mouth will receive, which will prevent infectious agents from getting into our body and attacking our immune system.

TIPS:

- Want a change from plain water? Make it exciting by infusing it with lemon slices, berries, cucumber slices, fresh ginger, or mint leaves
- If you are having a sweet beverage, add water to dilute the sugary taste. It will not only make the flavor better but also give your body a chance to drink more water
- Carry water in a marked water bottle to keep a track of how much water you are consuming
- Drink a glass of warm water each morning to aid digestion and help relieve bloating, acidity, and gas.



5. BLUEBERRIES

Blueberries are not only delicious and low in calories, they are absolutely packed with nutritional benefits. Often considered a superfood, they are rich in several nutritive compounds. In addition to being a tasty snack, blueberries are chief regulators of the immune system — thanks to their antioxidant-rich composition. As per a study conducted by the University of Auckland, consuming flavonoids, a type of antioxidant found in blueberries can decrease the likelihood of catching a cold by 33%. [11]

Blueberries also contain another compound called pterostilbene, which significantly up-regulates the expression of the CAMP gene in cells. This CAMP gene is responsible for producing proteins that help our immune system protect us against bacterial infections. Studies have found that taking pterostilbene together with vitamin D can significantly improve the immune response by regulating the CAMP gene expression. [12]

TIPS:

- Can't get your hands on fresh blueberries? Fear not. You can still purchase them in frozen or freeze dried forms.
- Use blueberries to top your cereals, oatmeal, pancakes, waffles, or yogurt.
- Add them in a blender with a little water and make homemade blueberry syrup to add in deserts
- Did you accidentally buy a sad, sour supply of blueberries that does not taste so good? Toss it in some honey along with a little fresh juice. You may also add ginger or cinnamon to it for extra flavor. Then let it sit for an hour at room temperature and watch your berries become saucy.

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6. GINSENG

Ginseng, used for thousands of years in traditional Chinese medicine, has gained world-wide popularity, not only for its delicious taste — but also for its immune-boosting properties. For centuries, people have been relying on this natural herb for the treatment of many upper respiratory tract infections.

One study exploring the benefits of ginseng investigated 39 people recovering from surgery for stomach cancer.[13] These patients were treated with 5,400 mg of ginseng every day for two years. The scientists were amazed to find significant improvements in their immunity and a low incidence of symptoms in all patients.

Another research study closely examined the effect of ginseng extract on the immune system of people with stomach cancer.[14] After three months of using this extract, their immune system was much stronger as compared to those who did not use the extract. It is also interesting to know that using ginseng extract can improve the effectiveness of vaccinations against several diseases like the common flu. [15]

TIPS:

- Buy ginseng from a health food store and always look for the top brands. If you can't find its whole roots, you can buy powdered ginseng, too.
- If the strong taste doesn't deter you, you can always have raw ginseng whenever you want.
- Add boiling water to freshly grated ginseng, let it sit for some time and strain it for some natural immune-boosting ginseng tea.
- Add it to soups and stir fries to give them a kick!

7. TOMATOES

Here's a fun fact about tomatoes: while most people consider it to be a vegetable, a tomato is actually categorized as a fruit. It is native to Central and Southern America and belongs to the nightshade family.

Remember how our mothers used to feed us tomato soup when we fell sick? There was a valid reason behind it: the high nutritive value of tomatoes. Tomatoes are particularly high in vitamin C. A medium-sized tomato can provide your body with more than 16 milligrams of this essential vitamin to boost the immune system and to help you to overcome many diseases.

In a German study, vitamin C has been shown to play a vital role in strengthening the immune system by increasing its two major cells: the T-cells and phagocytes.[16] The same research also proved that a deficiency of vitamin C can weaken the immune system and lower the body's resistance against many pathogens.

TIPS:

- Always look for tomatoes that are firm and ripe, but not too hard. Just pick up a tomato and if it feels heavy, it is just right
- Tomatoes are best stored at room temperature. Only think of refrigerating them on hot days or when they get too ripe.
- Raw tomatoes are the most nutritious and must always be considered as the preferred route of consumption
- Mix tomatoes in some boiled pickling brine and refrigerate them. Pickled tomatoes can be safely enjoyed for up to two months.

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8. ALOE VERA

It would not be wrong to consider aloe vera as among the most important herbs of all time. It was considered an essential part of natural medicine by many ancient civilizations who depended on it for multiple healing purposes.



The Greeks acknowledged its benefits and wrote about its useful properties for the old and young alike. For them, aloe vera was a magical herb, which not only helped with skin injuries and burns but also acted as an elixir to support the immune system and overall well being.

The aloe plant consists of over a hundred active components, including amino acids, minerals, vitamins, and phytonutrients. Among these, there are a few that work effortlessly to heighten your immunity.

One of them is polysaccharides; long chain carbohydrates that stimulate the immune cells to work against foreign invaders like influenza, cold, and other harmful pathogens. [17] Sterols and sterolins are other important components of aloe vera, which balance your immune cells and improve their overall response. [18]

TIPS:

- Looking for an authentic aloe vera source? Just grow one at your home. Aloe vera plant is extremely easy to grow in your own home. It is sturdy requires little care
- Wash some fresh aloe leaves and chop them. Make sure to get rid of the spiky ends, and separate the flat leaves from the gel and latex. Toss these leaves into salads.
- You can mix the aloe gel in vinegar and olive oil to make some delicious salad dressing.
- Dilute some aloe vera gel and pour it in an ice cube tray and freeze. Put a handful of these ice cubes into the blender whenever you are making a smoothie.

9. DARK CHOCOLATE

Believe it or not, dark chocolate is a natural immune booster. A study published by the U.S. National Institutes of Health found that cacao, the main ingredient of dark chocolate, can benefit the immune system. It can regulate the inflammatory response and improve the adaptive immune response as well. [19]

Cacao is also considered among the richest sources of antioxidants. Its high flavonoid content can strengthen the immune system and protect the body against cardiovascular problems like stroke and heart diseases.[20]

It is also rich in theobromine, a powerful antioxidant that fights off infections like cough and cold.[21]



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TIPS:

- Add a few squares of dark chocolate in your smoothies; dark chocolate is delicious with any fruit
- Make a dark chocolate sauce and dip your favorite immune-boosting fruits into it for an adventure
- Always choose at least 70% dark chocolate or higher to get the maximum amount of flavanols
- Store in a dry, cool area, preferably in an air-tight container. If stored properly, your dark chocolate can survive up to two years

10. RED PEPPERS

Oranges are not the only natural source of vitamin C. Bell peppers, particularly the red ones, have a high vitamin C content. In fact, they have almost double the amount of vitamin C than most vegetables and fruits. With this brightly-colored vegetable, we can easily increase the antibody production, which is key to bolstering the immune activity.

Consuming 200 milligrams of vitamin C daily can cut our risk of acquiring coughs and colds by half. It can also reduce the duration and severity of symptoms by 8% and 18% in adults and children, respectively. [22]

TIPS:

- Always go for red peppers that are thick, bright, and glossy.
- Add fresh or roasted red peppers to hummus (either homemade or store bought). They liven up just about any dip or salsa
- Roast a large batch of bell peppers in your oven. These roasted veggies can be kept in the fridge for weeks to add to your sandwiches and salads or blend in your dressing.

11. BROCCOLI

Researchers from the University of California, Los Angeles report that broccoli is an amazing addition to your diet if you want to boost your immune system and protect yourself from cold and flu.[23] Sulforaphane, a chemical found in broccoli, can switch on a set of antioxidant enzymes and genes in immune cells, which enables them to fight and prevent the harmful effects of free radicals.

Free radicals refer to the byproducts released during normal body processes; for instance, when the body converts food into energy.

Free radicals can also enter the body through tiny particles present in polluted air. They are actually a supercharged form of oxygen and can cause oxidative damage to the tissues, leading to disease. For example, these particles may trigger inflammation in the body that clogs the arteries. Oxidative damage is also a major reason why our bodies sometimes start aging prematurely.

But now, thanks to healing foods like broccoli, we can begin to offset these damaging processes.

TIPS:

- Broccoli is best eaten in raw form. Soak it in cold water for 10 minutes to make it crispy.
- Bake the florets of broccoli in the oven until their edges become brown and tender. Sprinkle some lemon juice before putting them in the oven for the extra flavor.
- Sautee your cut up broccoli with some cloves of garlic to make a powerful immune-boosting dinner.

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12. KALE

Kale is a famous superfood and a favorite of many. Its dark green hue indicates all the goodness that's packed in it, in terms of nutrients and flavor.

Like other leafy greens, kale is extremely high in antioxidants. These antioxidants include polyphenols, flavonoids, and beta-carotene, all of which have powerful immune boosting properties. [24]

Kale also contains kaempferol and quercetin, two important flavonoids that have been proven to possess antiviral, anti-cancer, and antidepressant properties, to name a few. [25]

Vitamin C is another important constituent of kale and a powerful oxidant that serves many important immune functions in the body. As a matter of fact, kale is one of the best sources of vitamin C. A cup of raw kale can provide you even more vitamin C than an entire orange.

Just imagine what it can do to your immune system!

TIPS:

- Kale does not always need to be cooked to be enjoyed. Just slice it finely and add it in your daily salads.
- Enjoy the sturdy texture of kale by throwing it in a steaming pot of soup.
- Throw a few leaves of kale in the oven along with salt and olive oil and allow it to bake. The result? Extremely crispy and delicious kale chips.
- Simply add a handful of kale leaves into any smoothie of your choice to get some extra goodness.

13. GREEN TEA

The green tea craze has, in recent decades, taken the Western world by storm. However, its existence in China, India, and Japan dates back many centuries. Traditionally, Indians, Chinese, and Japanese have been utilizing green tea in their medicinal practice to prevent many ailments and boost the immune system.

Besides keeping illnesses at bay, green tea has also been proven to improve cognitive function, trigger weight loss, and increase life expectancy. But one of its unbeatable benefits is undoubtedly its ability to boost the immune system. [26]

Green tea has the highest amount of polyphenol antioxidants compared to all other types of teas. This is possibly due to the fact that green tea undergoes a lesser amount of processing. For its preparation, fresh leaves of the Camellia Sinensis plant are harvested and passed rapidly through a steaming process to prevent oxidation and fermentation of its essential compounds. As a result, the green tea we get has richer polyphenol compounds. Catechins and flavonols, responsible for its immune-boosting properties, are the most important polyphenols present in green tea.



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This is backed by numerous studies. According to a study published in the Journal of Indian Society of Periodontology, green tea has flavonoids, a type of antioxidant that controls inflammation and boosts immunity.[27] The same study also sheds a light on catechin, which possesses some powerful antiviral and antibacterial properties; thereby, protecting the body against the diseases caused by these entities.

TIPS:

- Want to spice up your green tea? Literally? Then simply grind some tea leaves along with your favorite herbs and spices to form a spice rub. You can add them to tempeh, tofu, and seitan.
- Replace water with green tea in all your favorite recipes to enjoy its nutritious taste.
- Love marinating tofu, seitan, or tempeh? Add some brewed tea leaves to the marinade.
- Use powdered green tea with flour. For every cup of flour, add one teaspoon of this ground green tea powder and use the batter to make delicious cupcakes and teacakes.

14. SPINACH

Spinach is often regarded as one of the healthiest foods to maximize your health. If you thought spinach was just for your eyes, you'll be pleasantly surprised. Spinach is one of the best natural foods to boost the body's immunity.

Spinach is an amazing muscle builder (as Popeye could tell you!), and it's loaded with many healthy minerals and vitamins, such as iron, lutein, and folate.



It is also a great source of plant-based omega-3 fatty acids. Spinach also contains healthy amounts of phytonutrients, naturally-existing chemicals that possess strong anti-inflammatory properties and can help ward off germs and pathogens. The presence of these phytonutrients automatically makes spinach a great booster of the immune system.[28]

As a bonus, spinach also provides the body with a good supply of immune-regulating vitamin A. [29]

TIPS:

- When dealing with spinach, remember the rules: the drier the better, the fresher the better, and the cooler the better.
- Add spinach to your next smoothie. It tastes great with banana, pineapple, orange, and any kind of berry
- Can't figure out how to use spinach in your meal? Just chop some fresh leaves and add to your soups, stir fries, and spaghetti sauce just two minutes before serving.
- Add fresh spinach to sandwiches, salads, wraps, and dips

15. STAR ANISE

Spices exist in all shapes and sizes, and star anise is an amazing example of that. And although it shares a similar name and flavor with anise, the two are not related.

Star anise is a common ingredient of Asian cuisine and its popularity is increasing in the West. It is a star-shaped, dark-colored spice with a taste similar to licorice. Its unique appearance and taste separate it from all other cooking herbs and spices. As well, star anise is particularly famous for its medicinal properties.

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Research suggests that star anise possesses strong antifungal and antibacterial properties. It also contains antioxidants that can greatly boost your immunity.[30]

Important health-promoting compounds found in star anise include: limonene, linalool, quercetin, anethole, shikimic acid, and gallic acid. This powerful combination of compounds has strong antibacterial and anti-inflammatory effects that boost immunity and kill pathogens. Some studies suggest that it also contains antioxidant properties that balance the immune system. [31]

TIPS:

- Star anise continues to add its flavor to the dish as long as you are cooking; so if you have added it earlier in your meal, consider removing its pods before serving
- Infuse star anise into soups and stir fry or toss it with roasted nuts to enjoy its unique flavor
- Add it to roasted vegetable dishes, especially root vegetables like carrots, sweet potatoes, parsnips, and butternut squash

16. SAUERKRAUT

We can all agree on the fact that sauerkraut is a great addition to sausages, hot dogs, salads, and sandwiches. But besides being delicious, sauerkraut has many health benefits such as being a rich source of immune-boosting nutrients and probiotics.

Probiotics improve the balance of the beneficial bacteria present in your gut, which, in turn, keeps your gut lining healthy and strengthens your immune system.

Maintaining a healthy gut flora has been proven to stop the growth of harmful bacteria, and it helps boost the production of natural antibodies.

If you regularly consume probiotic foods such as sauerkraut, it will cut down your risk of developing multiple infections; from the dreaded urinary tract infections to the common cold. [32]

TIPS:

- While shopping for sauerkraut, make sure to read the label and get its long fermented version
- Try adding sauerkraut in soups, salads, and sandwiches.
- Sauerkraut naturally mixes in all recipes that call for olives, pickles, or any other briny ingredients.
- To preserve the beneficial bacteria, store sauerkraut at a temperature less than 115 degrees F.



17. GARLIC

For thousands of years, people have considered garlic an elixir of health. Garlic cloves are amazing remedies to treat the common cold, prevent plague, and even ward off vampires! This pungent-smelling veggie is actually the bulb of a plant belonging to the sweet-smelling lily family.

Garlic is an important natural medicine when it comes to boosting your immune system. When you take a clove of garlic and crush it between your teeth, it converts into allicin, the active ingredient of garlic.[33]

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Allicin is rich in sulfur, which also provides it with a distinctive taste and smell. However, allicin is rather unstable so it quickly converts into other compounds that provide garlic its immune-boosting properties. [34]

Garlic has been shown to improve the disease-fighting response of the immune cells. It can also protect against viruses that cause common cold and flu.[35]

TIPS:

- While shopping for garlic, always look for unblemished bulbs with firm cloves and dry skins.
- Add garlic to your fries, roasted vegetables dishes, rice dishes, or in your tomato sauce
- Enjoy garlic in soups: either a smooth, more blended one or a rustic one with small pieces of bread.

18. APPLES

You've heard your mother say, "an apple a day keeps the doctor away" — but with emerging scientific evidence, it doesn't seem like an old wives' tale anymore. In fact, apples do play an important role when it comes to preventing diseases and boosting the immune system. The fruit is loaded with phytochemical antioxidants that boost immunity and lower the risk of acquiring long-term diseases, as per research. [36]

The potent antioxidant properties of apples exert a strong protective effect on the lungs and save them from damage. A large-scale study, with more than 68,000 participants, proved that those who ate more apples had the lowest risk of acquiring asthma.[37] It also revealed that eating almost 15% of a large apple daily can cut down the risk of asthma by 10%

The skin of the apples is particularly rich in a flavonoid called quercetin, which regulates the immune system and plays an important role in reducing inflammation. This is why most health experts advise eating apples without peeling the skin.

TIPS:

- To buy high-quality apples, check its firmness by pressing it gently. Avoid any pieces that are soft, mushy, or indent easily on light pressure.
- Add apples to all your smoothies and salads
- Make no-bake apple crisp, apple oatmeal cookies, or apple pie

19. MUSHROOMS

Have you ever heard of medicinal mushrooms? They refer to edible fungi that are particularly famous for their health properties. There are almost 14,000 to 22,000 species of mushroom spread throughout the world — of which only 20 to 30 are edible.[38] These mushrooms are so nutrient-dense that they are used widely in supplements.

According to the latest scientific evidence, mushrooms are a great natural ingredient to boost immunity.[39] People who eat shiitake mushrooms every day have been found to have increased both the strength and quantity of immunity-boosting T-cells in their bodies. These mushrooms also cause a simultaneous decrease in the inflammation-inducing proteins, proving that shiitake mushrooms possess anti-inflammatory properties.



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Another popular form of medicinal mushrooms is reishi mushrooms that contain chemical substances called triterpenes.[40] These triterpenes possess strong anti-inflammatory properties that keep the inflammatory markers in check. Moreover, reishi mushrooms promote a good night's sleep, allowing the immune system to recover and strengthen.

TIPS:

- While cleaning mushrooms, limit the use of water or they will soak all the water and become soggy.
- Mushrooms are best cooked at high heat so that as they release their liquid, it is quickly cooked off.
- Add mushrooms to soups and stuffing or simply grill them and enjoy separately.

20. ROSEMARY

Rosemary, along with many other herbs such as basil, lavender, thyme, and oregano, belongs to the mint family called Lamiaceae. It is mostly prepared in the form of dried powdered extract or whole dried herbs. Some people also use fresh or dried leaves to prepare liquid extracts and herbal teas.

Rosemary has an extraordinary taste that complements many culinary dishes, be it rosemary lamb or rosemary chicken. In addition to its culinary qualities, rosemary is also a natural source of many essential nutrients such as calcium, iron, and vitamin B5.

A study published in the Critical Reviews in Food Science and Nutrition found that rosemary possesses anti-inflammatory properties that improve the gut and digestive health and boost the immune system. [41]

TIPS:

- You can easily buy dried rosemary in the spice section and the fresh one in the produce section of the store.
- Mix rosemary leaves with crushed garlic, lemon juice and kosher salt. Add it to butter to make your own rosemary-garlic butter spread.
- Rosemary can be easily added to protein dishes like roasted chicken thighs, pork tenderloins, and pork chops.

21. PUMPKIN

During the autumn months, you simply cannot go anywhere without finding something that is pumpkin flavored. With all the seasonal tie-ins and its talent to enhance so many foods and beverages — from pastas to soups to lattes — it is important to note that pumpkin is a great immune booster.



Pumpkin is loaded with essential nutrients that can give your immune system a boost and a much better chance against the deadly viruses and bacteria.

It is particularly high in beta-carotene, a chemical that your body immediately turns into vitamin A. Research has shown that vitamin A can help protect your body fight against harmful germs. [42]

Pumpkin also contains other essential vitamins, like vitamins C and E, which boost immunity, heal wounds faster, and keep you fit and healthy.

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TIPS:

- Once you cut up a fresh pumpkin, wrap it in plastic and keep it in the refrigerator.
- Use it as a substitute in all recipes that include butternut squash or any veggie belonging to the winter squash family.
- Don't forget to scoop out the seeds before using pumpkin.
- Don't throw away the pumpkin seeds. Wash them thoroughly, spread them on a baking sheet and roast them. They'll serve as the perfect snack.

22. RAW HONEY

Honey: a sweet, sticky, thick liquid that originates from the flower nectar and is transformed into this golden elixir by honey bees.

Possibly the most natural food available, honey is a rich source of many healthy nutrients like magnesium, iron, and calcium. The compounds found in raw honey have been proven to exhibit anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, and even anti-cancer properties. [43]

The strong antibacterial and antioxidant properties of honey can improve digestive health and strengthen immunity. Some regard it as the powerhouse of antioxidants as it can remove free radicals from the body and allow your immune system to recover. [44]

TIPS:

- Need a quick way to use honey? Use it to sweeten your marinades, dressings, and beverages.
- Spread some honey on your toast or add some in your cereal.
- Always look for local varieties of honey in your area as they are more pure. If you wish to buy it from a supermarket, only get it from authentic companies that sell organic varieties.

23. NUTS

Nuts are a common dietary staple, and a very delicious and nutritious snack. They are extremely versatile and can be easily added to meals, snacks, treats, and toppings. They also have a longer shelf life, which makes them a convenient food to boost your immunity.



Most nuts are rich in vitamin E, a natural component needed to fight diseases. According to a study published in the Journal of the American College of Nutrition, smokers consuming 50 milligrams of vitamin E on a daily basis can reduce their risk of acquiring a cold by 28 percent. [45]

Mentioned below are some types of nuts to consume if you wish to boost your immune system.

Almonds

Be it through online shopping or a personal trip to the grocery store, almonds are very convenient to find. They make a perfectly healthy snack and can be easily added to yogurts and salads. The high vitamin E content in almonds provides it with strong antioxidant properties, which greatly support the immune system.

Walnuts

Walnuts are an amazing source of many minerals and vitamins such as vitamin B6 and copper. Copper in walnuts can help maintain the health of nerves and bones; vitamin B6 strengthens the immune system. [46]

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Pistachios

Vitamin B6 is crucial if you wish to maintain a healthy immune system, and one of the best sources of this vitamin is pistachios.[47] Vitamin B6 found in pistachios promotes the blood flow through the body, providing fresh, oxygenated blood to all the cells. It also improves the health of many immunity-related organs in the body such as the spleen and the lymph nodes. These two effects combine to aid in the synthesis of immune cells that defend the body from infections.

Brazil Nuts

Brazil nuts contain several important nutrients that are essential for the immune system, including iron, zinc, and selenium. Brazil nuts are particularly famous for their abundant selenium levels, and are, in fact, one of the richest food sources of selenium — a trace element that the body needs to run a healthy immune system.[48]

TIPS:

- Buy nuts from places where there is a high turnover. And don't forget to check out their bulk section.
- Nuts can pick up other odors quite easily so store them in sealed containers, away from sunlight.
- You can make an excellent crust for tarts and pies using nuts.
- Don't feel like eating plain nuts? Use them to make nut butters.
- Throw them in a smoothie or blend them with milk.

24. FENNEL SEEDS

Fennel seeds top the list of healing herbs that boost the immune system. This fragrant spice — commonly used as a mouth freshener or in curries — can do wonders for our immune system, too.

Fennel seeds are a rich source of vitamin C, which has strong immune-boosting properties. Additionally, vitamin C is a strong antioxidant that keeps the free radical damage at bay.

In fact, fennel seeds possess a mixture of anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and antioxidant properties that can protect the body from both seasonal and long-term diseases.

According to a research study published in BioMed Research International, fennel seeds can provide soothing effects to those suffering from numerous diseases. [49] These diseases include fevers, digestive diseases, conjunctivitis, and coughs and colds. The same research also backed the anti-inflammatory properties of fennel seeds, which it attributed to flavonoids.

TIPS:

- Grind or crush whole fennel seeds just before adding them to food. This will help release their flavor and oil in a better way.
- Crush a spoonful of fennel seeds and pour some hot water over them to make a simple tea.
- Toast some fennel seeds and add them to dishes to give them a licorice-like, sweet flavor.
- Add one tablespoon of fennel seeds to the batter before baking.



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25. SHILAJIT

You may think that you haven't heard of fulvic acid before; or you may confuse it with folic acid, a type of vitamin B. But given its incredible nutritional and medicinal properties, you need to become familiar with natural medicine powerhouse.

Fulvic acid is the original source of almost every other mineral and vitamin that we eat in one form or another. The selenium in Brazil nuts? The vitamin C in lemon? The iron in spinach? All of these minerals and vitamins came from the soil; the very soil where the decomposing plants converted into rich humus and released certain products called humic acids — fulvic acid being one of them.

Millions of microbes present in fulvic acid work synergistically with plant roots to extract all nutrients and minerals from the soil. These nutrients and minerals are then converted into ionic forms, which are easier for the plants to absorb. These plants are later harvested and eaten by humans. And that is how these nutrients end up in our bodies.

Fulvic acid has been well researched for its effects on inflammation and immune health. Research strongly suggests that it can bolster the body's natural defense against many types of illnesses. Several studies have shown that fulvic acid can strengthen the immune defenses, improve disease resistance, enhance the antioxidant activity, and fight inflammation, all of which ultimately up-regulate the immune system. [50] [51]

But how can you consume fulvic acid to boost your immune system? This is where Shilajit comes in.

Shilajit is a substance secreted by rocks in many mountain ranges across the world; the most prominent of them being the Himalayas. This natural substance has almost 15 to 20% of fulvic acid in its natural composition and is, therefore, popular for stimulating the immune system and enhancing performance. [52]

TIPS:

- Shilajit is available in powder and liquid forms. Only buy it from authentic users.
- If you have shilajit in liquid form, dissolve a pea size in any beverage, like green tea, and drink it up to three times a day.
- If you have shilajit powder, consume it twice a day with milk.
- Shilajit is best consumed after meals.



WHAT'S GONNA BE ON YOUR PLATE NOW?

Nobody likes to fall sick — colds, coughs, and other ailments can be discomforting and interrupt our daily lives. These illnesses make us infectious to others; and falling sick from time to time is unfortunately a fact of life.

After all, we are busy living life in the 21st century where we have to interact with all sorts of people throughout the day. Think about all those hugs with friends, business meetings with handshakes, shared spaces with roommates, spouses, or kids, and public transport where we are sharing air with many strangers. There are potential germs everywhere, ready to lay us low with a bug.

Don't get us wrong. Succumbing to a sneeze does not mean you are weak. But it is something that can be avoided if we take all the necessary steps to boost immunity. The stronger our immune system, the less likely we are to give in to dreaded viruses or bacteria.

Remember! It's easy to take your immune system for granted, because it does a good job of keeping us healthy most of the time. If you want to achieve and maintain a healthy immune system, use our top 25, all-natural immune boosters to look after it — and we promise you it will look after you.



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