

Road to **WELLfluent**™

Embrace better health.

You Are What You Eat: Choose Foods That Boost Immunity and Fight Infection

Eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep and exercising daily are important for your overall wellness. Now more than ever with the COVID-19 outbreak, boost your immune system as much as possible.

Making sure you are eating a diet high in immune-boosting nutrients is one way you can take an active role in maintaining your health. Your body uses and absorbs nutrients more efficiently when they come from whole food sources like fruits and vegetables, rather than processed foods or supplements. Getting a variety of these foods and nutrients in your diet is essential compared to focusing on just one or two in large quantities. The more colorful your plate is with a variety of choices from the list below, the better.

Consuming foods high in vitamin C such as grapefruits, oranges, tangerines, sweet red pepper, broccoli, strawberries, kale and kiwifruit are thought to increase white blood cell production, which is key to fighting infection.

Beta-carotene converts into vitamin A, which is an anti-inflammatory vitamin that can help your antibodies respond to toxins, such as a virus. Carrots, spinach, kale, apricots, sweet potato, squash and cantaloupe are all great sources of beta-carotene. Vitamin A is a fat-soluble vitamin, so consuming foods with healthy fats will aid in its absorption. A great immune-boosting combination would be carrots with traditional hummus or a spinach salad with avocado or olive oil in the dressing.

Vitamin E is a fat-soluble vitamin that is key in regulating and supporting immune system function. Foods rich in vitamin E include nuts, seeds, avocado and spinach.

Green tea is packed with antioxidants to enhance immune system function. It also contains amino acids that may aid in the production of germ-fighting compounds in your T cells, which reduces inflammation in the body and helps fight infection. Green tea can be consumed hot, cold or as matcha powder.



Vitamin D is essential to immune function and helps regulate the body's immune response. Vitamin D can be found in salmon, canned tuna, egg yolks and yogurt. Your body can also synthesize vitamin D with just 13-15 minutes of sunshine three times a week.

Yogurt contains live cultures, also known as probiotics, which are thought to help stimulate the immune system to fight off disease.

Garlic contains compounds that help the immune system fight germs in a variety of ways by stimulating cells important to fighting disease and helping to regulate the immune system. It helps boost the production of virus-fighting T cells and can reduce the amount of stress hormones your body produces which can help keep your immune system functioning at full strength.

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Vitamin B6 is essential in the formation of new and healthy red blood cells, and aids in maintaining the lymphatic system. Chicken, turkey, cold-water fish (salmon and tuna), chickpeas (traditional hummus), bananas and fortified breakfast cereals are great options for consuming vitamin B6.

Water helps produce lymph which carries white blood cells and other immune system cells through the body. There are many foods with high water content such as cucumbers, watermelon and celery. If you have a hard time drinking plain water, try a cup of green tea with lemon, watermelon, cucumber or mint-infused water for an immune system powerhouse beverage.

Immune system cells need zinc to function as they are intended. Zinc is a mineral that our body does not store or produce. While oysters have the highest food content of zinc, there are several other options such as shellfish (crab, clams, lobster, and mussels), poultry (chicken or turkey), red meat and beans. Zinc is also found in fortified cereals and some breads, but the best absorption comes from animal-based food.

Tammy Ward, RD, a specialist in oncology nutrition at the University of Cincinnati Cancer Center, shares, "Having the tools you need, such as the information provided here, gives you the framework to plan the 'what' and 'why' of eating to support a healthy immune system. As you take stock of this information, consider layering the practice of mindful eating to your plan. Mindful eating is a way to be present, focused and tuned in to the pleasure of eating. This practice can also help decrease stress which can adversely affect your immune system. As you sit down to enjoy your meals, possibly with friends or family members, take time to consider where your food came from, the journey the food took to get to your plate, its taste, texture, and aroma. The practice of mindful eating helps us slow down, stay in the moment and reconnect to the food that fuels our bodies. Bon appetite!"

Source: <https://www.uchealth.com/en/media-room/covid-19/boost-immunity-with-food>

VACCINATION GUIDANCE DURING A PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed how healthcare providers operate to continue delivering essential services to patients. Ensuring immunization services are maintained or reinitiated is essential for protecting individuals and communities from vaccine-preventable diseases and outbreaks and reducing the burden of respiratory illness during the upcoming influenza season.

Routine vaccination is an essential preventive care service for children, adolescents and adults (including pregnant women) that should not be delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of COVID-19-related reductions in people accessing vaccination services, it is important for healthcare providers to assess the vaccination status of all patients at each visit to avoid missed opportunities for vaccination and ensure timely vaccine catch-up. All vaccines due or overdue should be administered according to the recommended CDC immunization schedules during that visit, unless a specific contraindication exists, to provide protection as soon as possible as well as minimize the number of healthcare visits needed to complete vaccination.

Vaccination prevents illnesses that lead to unnecessary medical visits, hospitalizations and further strain on the healthcare system. For the upcoming influenza season, influenza vaccination will be paramount to reduce the impact of respiratory illnesses in the population and resulting burdens on the healthcare system during the COVID-19 pandemic. Communicating the importance



of vaccination to patients and parents/caregivers, as well as the safety protocols and procedures outlined in this guidance, can help provide reassurance to those who may otherwise be hesitant to present for vaccination visits.

Please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html> for the recommended timeline of all immunizations.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html>

WELLNESS VISITS: THE BEST WAY TO STAY HEALTHY

If you're like a lot of people, you probably only think of going to the doctor when you feel sick or you've been injured. But having routine preventive care visits and taking other steps to manage your health are just as important as sick visits when it comes to preventing diseases and staying healthy.

Now may be a great time to focus on wellness, before the cold and flu season arrives. An annual preventive care visit is recommended to ensure your doctor has an ongoing record of your health, which makes it easier to spot subtle signs of disease. Plus, annual visits ensure you get the recommended health screenings and immunizations that can keep you healthy.

AvMed offers comprehensive preventive care services as part of your coverage options. Being proactive about your own health and wellness is the best way to avoid serious medical issues and keep your healthcare costs to a minimum.

At AvMed, we make it easy for you. It starts by completing your confidential Personal Health Assessment (PHA), using the AvMed Wellness Portal by Healthyroads®. Just visit [AvMed.org](https://www.avmed.org), scroll to the bottom of the home page and click on Take Your PHA.



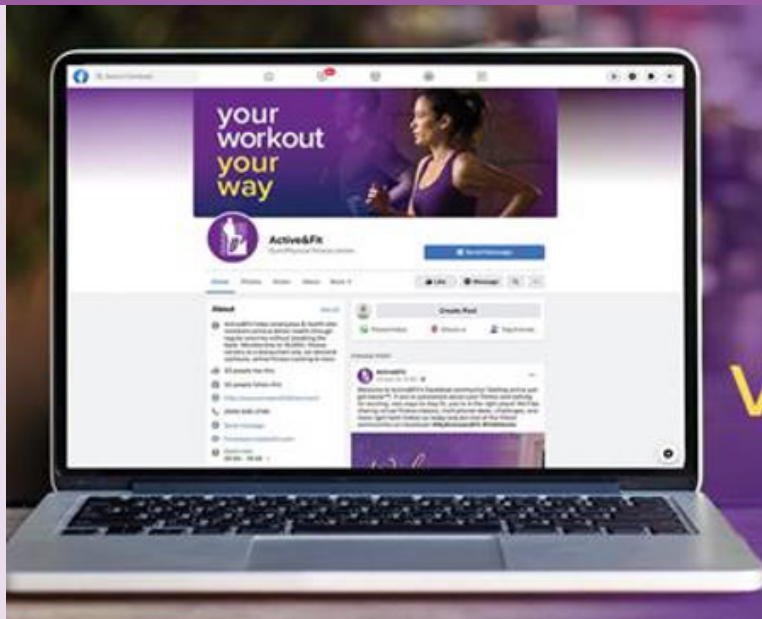
To view a complete list of preventive services, visit [AvMed.org](https://www.avmed.org). Contact your healthcare Provider to find out what services are recommended for you and to schedule your virtual or in-person visit and start enjoying a healthier you!

AvMed Wellness Tip:



This is the perfect time to improve your health. So why not get a jump-start to a healthier you by visiting AvMed's website to complete your Personal Health Assessment (PHA). This user-friendly online tool helps you understand your current health status, identify potential health risks and set realistic improvement goals based on your specific needs. By completing this confidential questionnaire, you will receive a personalized scorecard including recommendations and resources to help you target possible risk and alleviate healthcare costs.

To get started visit [AvMed.org](https://www.avmed.org). Scroll down and click on Take your PHA and log in to your account. Congratulations for taking this important step toward a healthier you!



INTRODUCING VIRTUAL WORKOUTS FOR EVERYONE

Follow @MyActiveandFit on Facebook Live where we're hosting 30-minute virtual workouts every Monday-Friday at 3 pm. You can also watch them anytime on YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXxRHn1SAt4_CvLYoBu05uQ

These workouts are available to everyone at no cost, so your friends and family can follow and subscribe to @MyActiveandFit, too! You can get Fit at Home™ together—even though you may be apart.

Classes are led by a certified instructor and focus on a different type of exercise each day. All fitness levels are welcome!

- **Mondays: Upper Body Blast**

Exercises focused on your upper body. Dumbbells and resistance bands will be used. Home hacks for equipment provided.

- **Tuesdays: Yoga Flow**

Ignite your body, mind, and spirit. Focus will be on deep breathing and controlled yoga flows. A yoga mat is recommended.

- **Wednesdays: Lower Body Blast**

Workout focused on your lower body (including glutes). Dumbbells, resistance bands, and gliders will be used. Home hacks for equipment provided.

- **Thursdays: Yoga Core**

Ignite your body, mind, and spirit. Class will include deep breathing and controlled yoga flows with a focus on your core. A yoga mat is recommended.

- **Fridays: Fitness Mixer**

Your favorite exercises from the week will be remixed to end the week with a little fitness fun.

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A Wellness Newsletter for AvMed Members
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