

# Road to **WELL**fluent™

Embrace better health.

## Six Tips to Enhance Immunity

A healthy lifestyle offers many benefits, including helping to prevent heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and other chronic diseases. Another important benefit is that healthy routines enhance your immunity.

The immune system is the body's way of protecting itself from infection and disease; it fights everything from cold and flu viruses to serious conditions such as cancer.

Our immune systems are complex and influenced by many factors. Vaccines build immunity against specific diseases. Some additional ways you can strengthen your immune system are eating well, being physically active, maintaining a healthy weight, getting enough sleep, not smoking, and avoiding excessive alcohol use.

### **Eat Well**

Eating well means emphasizing plenty of fruits and vegetables, lean protein, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products. Eating well also means limiting saturated fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars.

Eating well provides multiple nutrients that support optimal immune function. Be aware, however, that too much of some vitamins and minerals can be harmful. Talk to your health care provider if you think you need nutritional supplements.

### **Be Physically Active**

Regular physical activity helps you feel better, sleep better, and reduce anxiety. Combined with eating well, physical activity can help a person maintain a healthy weight.

Following the physical activity recommendations for your age provides immediate and long-term benefits. Emerging research also suggests that physical activity may potentially benefit immunity.

### **Maintain a Healthy Weight**

Excess weight can affect how your body functions. Obesity, defined as a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or more in adults, is linked to impaired immune functions. Obesity may also lower vaccine effectiveness for numerous diseases, including influenza, hepatitis B and tetanus.



Safe ways to help maintain a healthy weight include reducing stress, eating healthy foods, getting enough sleep, and engaging in regular physical activity.

### **Get Enough Sleep**

Scientific evidence is building that sleep loss can negatively affect different parts of the immune system. This can lead to the development of a wide variety of disorders.

### **Quit Smoking**

Smoking can make the body less successful at fighting disease. Smoking increases the risk for immune system problems, including rheumatoid arthritis.

### **Avoid Too Much Alcohol**

Over time, excessive alcohol use can weaken the immune system.

In Summary, immunity is your body's defense against foreign organisms. Taking care of yourself will help your immune system take care of you.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/features/enhance-immunity/index.html>

# August is Children's Eye Health and Safety Month

With a large number of states beginning the school year earlier, August is the new September! Along with school supply shopping and purchasing those back-to-school clothing items, it's time to make comprehensive eye exam appointments for the kids. Conveniently, August is designated as Children's Eye Health and Safety Month!

A good rule of thumb is to have your children's eyes examined during well-child visits, beginning around age three. Your child's eye doctor can help detect refractive errors such as nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism as well as the following diseases:

- Amblyopia (lazy eye)
- Strabismus (crossed eyes)
- Ptosis (drooping of the eyelid)
- Color deficiency (color blindness)

If you or your doctor suspects that your child may have a vision problem, you can make an appointment with your local ophthalmologist for further testing. There are some specific warning signs that may indicate that your child has a vision problem. Some of these include:

- Wandering or crossed eyes
- A family history of childhood vision problems
- Disinterest in reading or viewing distant objects
- Squinting or turning the head in an unusual manner while watching television

Keeping your children's eyes safe is another part of maintaining healthy vision. Eye injuries are the leading cause of vision loss in children. There are about 42,000 sports-



related eye injuries every year in America, and children suffer most of these injuries. Help prevent your child from being one of the more than 12 million children who suffer from vision impairment by remembering a few basic rules of safety:

- All children should wear protective eyewear while participating in sports or recreational activities
- Purchase age-appropriate toys for your children and avoid toys with sharp or protruding parts (Source: HAP).

Help your children have a successful school year by scheduling a comprehensive eye exam and taking safety measures to ensure their eyes are free from injury.

Source: <https://yoursightmatters.com/august-childrens-eye-health-safety-month/>

## National Wellness Month

All during August, National Wellness Month focuses on self-care, managing stress and promoting healthy routines.

Research has shown self-care helps manage stress and promotes happiness. Whether you challenge yourself to a new yoga pose or try a different spa treatment, make a small change and impact your health in positive ways.

- Increase your water intake.
- Add more fruits and veggies to your meals.
- Monitor your sleep and make adjustments for better sleep habits
- Join a yoga, walking, or aerobics class.
- Learn to meditate.

These small steps can lead to many more healthy habits in your lifestyle.

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