

IMMUNE BOOSTING TIPS

Posted on December 9, 2021



It's that time of year again when the daylight hours are diminishing and the temperature is dropping. It's at this time of year that our immune systems could do with a little support and there are some very basic yet helpful choices we can make to help get us through the sneezes and sniffles of the winter months.

Eat a rainbow

70% of our immune system is in our gut, so eating to support our **gut health** can really help to build the immune system. Eating a 'rainbow diet' of plant foods can help feed our microbiome.

The aim is to **eat between 30–40+ different plant-based foods (including spices and herbs) each week** as studies have shown this to significantly improve immune health and overall well-being. In contrast, eating 10 or less plant foods per week can contribute to a poor microbiome diversity, potentially resulting in a poor immune system and more susceptibility to viruses and other pathogens.

Sleep

A lack of sleep can affect the immune system.

Looking at sleep hygiene can help; for example **no screen time an hour before bed**, blackout curtains so no light can enter the room, or having a relaxing bath or reading before bed.

Having a **protein-rich snack before bed** can sometimes help too, as going to bed on an empty stomach will make it more difficult for you to sleep through the night.

Drink enough water

Water helps your immune system to work well, so try and **drink 1.5 litres per day** to help support your health all year round but especially in the winter months. Remember it is better to drink water at room temperature. In the colder months try drinking it hot or warm and try different fruit and herbal teas if drinking plain water isn't your thing.

Consider a supplement

Supplements do not replace a healthy balanced diet full of vegetables and other fibre rich foods, protein, healthy fats and complex carbs, but can **supplement during times when we may need a boost!**

A **good quality multi vitamin** can give you a good base to work from, then look at adding other useful nutrients such as vitamin D, C and Zinc, olive leaf and black elderberry.