

Nutrition and Infectious Disease

Your diet plays an important role in protecting you from infectious diseases. A healthy immune system depends on eating a balanced healthy diet on a regular basis.

Certain vitamins and minerals contained in foods are key to an immune-boosting diet. These include Vitamins A, C, D, E; folate/folic acid, iron, selenium, and zinc. You can find these vitamins and minerals in both animal and vegetarian foods, fresh (is best) or frozen.

There are many foods that one can include in their diet to boost the immune system. Here is a list of the more common foods: Citrus fruits, watermelon, papaya, elderberry, kiwi, button mushrooms, spinach, broccoli, sweet potato, red bell peppers, yogurt (low fat), almonds, tea, oysters and other shellfish. Spices such as garlic, ginger, and turmeric are also beneficial.

You may have heard the phrase “eat the rainbow”. Eating a variety of colorful foods, many listed above, is important for a strong immune system and overall good health!



Here is a favorite recipe with immune boosting foods:



Strawberry Spinach Salad

1 lb spinach, fresh	1 ½ Tbsp sugar
2 pkgs almonds, slivered	1 qt strawberries (sliced)
Dressing: ¼ c red wine vinegar	
1/3 c olive oil	¼ tsp salt
1/3 c white sugar	½ tsp ground mustard
	½ Tbsp poppy seed

On low heat, cook sugar and almonds until brown. Remove from heat and put on wax paper. Make the dressing the night before. Mix all ingredients together before serving.

*Note: You may substitute the dressing recipe with bottled raspberry or poppy seed dressing.

Resources: health.clevelandclinic.org
www.healthline.com
www.webmd.com