

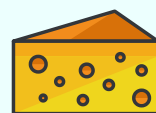
CAN FOODS BOOST OUR IMMUNE SYSTEM?

This is actually a misunderstanding of how our immune system works. A healthy immune system likes to be in balance and it is more helpful to think of how foods (and lifestyle) support its 'normal' or 'ideal' functioning. Eating a nutrient rich diet can assist your immune system in functioning at its ideal. These include:

Protein



meat, fish, chicken, eggs, legumes, dairy, tofu, nuts & seeds



Zinc

oysters, shellfish, meat, dairy, baked beans, pumpkin seeds, cashew and almonds

Selenium



brazil nuts, oily fish, meat, eggs, wholegrain breads, oats, baked beans



Iron

red meat, chicken, legumes, eggs, fortified cereals

Vitamin A



leafy green vegetables (spinach, kale, cabbage), orange and red fruit and vegetables (orange, sweet potato, capsicum, apricot)



Vitamin C

fruit and vegetables

Vitamin E



avocado, leafy green vegetables, nuts & seeds

Vitamin B (Pyridoxine)



meat, seafood, chickpeas, potato

Folate



spinach, asparagus, legumes, oranges, bananas

Do I need to take supplements?

Unfortunately there is no convincing evidence to show that taking supplements will give us disease fighting powers. Food is packaged (naturally by nature) with a variety of nutrients to support a healthy immune system. Eating a variety of different foods will ensure the body gets everything it needs from your diet.

Note: most of us are indoors more often due to COVID-19. As we usually get Vitamin D from sun exposure, a Vitamin D supplement may be considered. Your doctor can do a blood test if you want to check if your blood levels are low. If deficient, this is when a supplement would be most useful.

Can any foods protect us from COVID-19?

Be wary of advertisements that promote foods or supplements that claim to boost immunity in an attempt to protect us from COVID-19 i.e. large doses of Vitamin C or herbal remedies.

Although enticing, there is no evidence these options work. They could also distract you from doing the things that really help stop the spread i.e. hand washing and physical distancing.