

# Woman's World

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Your Good Health

## Don't get sick this winter!

With cold and flu season just around the corner, it's time to maximize your immune defenses. Here are the latest ways to do just that!



Outsmarting germs has never been easier!

### 1 Sleep in on weekends

Since deep sleep is your body's prime time for stockpiling infection-fighting white blood cells, it's no surprise studies show that sleep deprivation doubles your risk of catching a cold or the flu. "Simply getting enough sleep will help you build a more resilient immune system," confirms Jacob Teitelbaum, M.D., author of *From Fatigued to Fantastic!* In fact, according to research at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Mellon University, just getting a full night's sleep twice weekly could reduce your risk of illness as much as 80%!

**Sing while you drive!**  
Blood tests show regularly singing raises blood levels of Immunoglobulin A (IgA), an antibody that provides one of your first lines of defense against invading viruses.

### 3 Mix in mushrooms

Pizzas, salads, omelets, soups, stews . . . mushrooms give almost any dish gourmet pizzazz. Even better: Dozens of studies show these low-cal, fat-free delicacies contain antiviral and antibacterial compounds that can kick your immune system into high gear. And the latest research suggests eating just two-thirds of a cup daily could as much as double your ability to fend off cold and flu bugs!

### 4 Pop a multi

It takes mere seconds to swallow, and it can reduce your risk of infections by 76%, helping you avoid 17 sick days every year, studies show. All it takes is one good quality multi daily, not dozens of pricey individual supplements, notes Pamela Peeke, M.D., assistant professor of medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine in Baltimore. **TIP** Once past menopause, pick an iron-free multi. Although iron is essential for keeping your immune system strong, getting too much of it can fuel the growth of invading organisms.

### 5 Stock up on wheat germ

Its unusually rich supply of potassium, vitamin E, manganese and other essential nutrients can help restore a flagging immune system in as little as one week, European research reveals. The study-proven dose: 2 Tbs. daily. **TIP** Be creative! Wheat germ makes a delicious coating for chicken and fish—and a great substitute for bread crumbs in meat loaf, meatballs and hamburger patties. It also adds nutty crunch to yogurt, oatmeal, cold cereals, even peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

of germ-killing antibodies. Little time for workouts? "Breaking up your exercise, 10 minutes here, 10 minutes there, works like a charm," says Dr. Peeke. "It's like instantly activating your own internal medicine cabinet!"

**TIP** Don't overdo it! Exercisers who push themselves to exhaustion are six times more likely to develop upper respiratory tract infections than moderate exercisers!

—Brenda Kearns

### EAT healthy, BE healthy!

Consuming two or more of these nutrient-rich foods daily will help fend off this season's onslaught of cold and flu viruses:

- ✓ Garlic
- ✓ Tomatoes
- ✓ Onions
- ✓ Brazil nuts
- ✓ Ginger
- ✓ Red peppers
- ✓ Pumpkin
- ✓ Sweet potatoes
- ✓ Almonds
- ✓ Oranges

### Dear diary . . .

Studies from the University of Texas and elsewhere show writing in a journal for 20 minutes a day could cut the number of times you're ill this winter by 50% or more. Writing is so calming, it immediately increases production of Immunoglobulin A, which protects the body's mucous membranes from infection.

### 6 Get fit bit by bit

Scheduling in as little as 30 minutes of exercise four times a week stimulates the release of growth hormones, powerful chemical messengers that boost the function of protective white blood cells by 55%, plus double the production

