



Top 10 Ways to Fight a Cold or Flu [by Kim D'Eon, RHN](#)

As much as you might like a sick day, no one really wants to get sick. Luckily, there are really easy ways to prevent getting a cold or flu or to nip it in the bud when it does happen. The body is an amazing machine, and your immune system is designed to fight viruses, you just gotta give it a hand.



Here's my top ten list of natural immune boosters:

Eat lots of nutritious food: Yes, this seems like a given, but in the rush of life, the first thing we tend to neglect is the food we're putting in our mouths. Food fuels all the awesome biochemical reactions that make your immune system tick. Fresh fruits and vegetables, legumes,

Holistic Treatment for the Winter Blahs [by Nonie de Long, RHN](#)

When the season turns cold it's common for we the North to experience an energy slump and a noticeable drop in mood. These 'blahs' may be, in part, related to a drop in sun exposure and [corresponding vitamin D levels](#). Data is emerging that shows that inadequate vitamin D levels are linked to depression, alcoholism, mood disorders, schizophrenia, and Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). In some studies, supplementing with quality vitamin D in the therapeutic range resulted in a [noticeable decrease in symptoms](#) for participants. Sometimes, UV lights have also been used in studies

nuts and seeds are loaded with vitamin C and antioxidants. The more colour and variety you can get in, the better.

Avoid consuming irritants:

Things like sugar, trans fats (fried foods, margarine), caffeine and alcohol tax the body. Your body will spend so much of its precious resources trying to clean up that mess of toxins that it won't have enough strength leftover to fight the cold and flu virus. If you can't avoid irritants/stimulants all together, cut back a lot.

Sleep: Getting enough rest is always one of the best things you can do for your health. It's the time when our bodies perform all sorts of important metabolic reactions: **Continued on page 3...**

to help with SAD and it has been suggested that this is because of the vitamin D synthesis as a result of UV exposure.

This could be attractive to consumers, particularly given the dangers associated with the [pharmaceutical treatment](#) of SAD and depressive mood disorders, [namely SSRIs](#). For those wanting to try this holistic approach instead, enlisting a nutrition professional is wise, to oversee the trial and ensure you are within the optimal range. Going overboard with fat soluble **Continued on page 2...**

Issue 104 November,

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Need more help in fighting a cold or flu?

See a Holistic Nutrition Professional



Potato Leek Mushroom Soup by [Michelle Gaetz, RHN](#)

What you need:

2 tbsp coconut oil (or extra-virgin olive oil)
 1 cup leek (diced, dark leaves removed)
 3 stalks celery (diced)
 3-4 cloves of garlic (diced)
 3 cups mushrooms (any type will work – I used a mix of shitake and crimini)
 4-5 small potatoes (peeled and diced)
 1 tsp black pepper
 1 tsp sea salt
 1-2 bay leaves
 4 cups vegetable broth
 1-2 cups water (depending on how thin or chunky you like your soup)
 1/2 cup cashews (soaked and drained) – or use sunflower seeds if you want to make it nut free



What you do:

Heat your oil in a large stockpot over medium heat. Add the leek and celery and sauté for 4–5 minutes or until translucent. Add in garlic, bay leaves and sauté for another minute. Add the potatoes, mushrooms, black pepper, salt, vegetable broth and extra water if desired. Bring to a boil and then reduce to a simmer. Cover with a lid and cook for 15-20 minutes or until potatoes are cooked.

Add your cashews to the blender. Ladle in one cup of your soup and blend well until smooth to create your cashew cream. Now ladle more of your soup and puree. I keep about 1/2 -2/3 of the soup aside before blending because I prefer to have a chunky soup, but if you like creamed soups blend the whole soup. Be sure to remove bay leaves before blending.

If you find it's not thick enough to your liking, mix-up 1/4 cup of gluten-free flour/water mixture and add to soup to thicken.

Ensure you leave a place for the steam to escape from the blender, otherwise, the lid will blow off and make a big mess!

Garnish with fresh sprouts or parsley, salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

Editor's Note: According to an article in [Medical News Today](#), there are many benefits to consuming mushrooms. They are high in antioxidants and rich in B vitamins. They contain two types of dietary fibres in their cell walls, beta-glucans and chitin. These increase satiety and reduce appetite. By making you feel fuller longer, they can reduce overall calorie intake.

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vitamins can be dangerous because they can accumulate in the tissues over time. In addition, a professional will use a professional grade, whole food vitamin D supplement or fermented cod liver oil, which is the most beneficial way to get vitamin D with cofactors that work synergistically with it.

In addition, you can add vitamin D rich foods to your diet. These include salmon, herring, sardines, anchovies, tuna, oysters, shrimp, and egg yolks. Many "fortified foods" like pasteurized, commercial dairy products and non-dairy milk alternatives contain vitamin D, but the type of vitamin D they contain is often D2, which is not the one that is thought to be most beneficial. Similarly, prescription vitamin D for osteoporosis management is often D2, which is really not optimal for bone health. So it's best to check the labels yourself or consult a nutritionist to guide you. [Learn more](#) about the difference between D2 and D3.

When we go through the Winter Blahs, we **Continued on page 4...**

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proteins are being released, antibodies and immune cells are replenished, and the liver is busy working away at detoxifying. There's no way around it. Our bodies need sleep. You should be getting between 7-9 hours every night and more if you're sick. Don't be afraid to nap when you're feeling wiped. 20-minute power naps could help you stop that virus in its tracks.

Drink lots of water: It's a simple thing, but it's not easy for some people, I know. If you're not used to drinking water throughout the day, you should start getting into the habit. I explain how over in my How to Drink more water blog. Point is, proper hydration is essential in fighting off viruses. It lubricates your mucous membranes (eyes, mouth, nose) and helps produce the protective barrier that's needed to trap viruses and expel them from the body. It helps flush the body out from the inside too. More peeing and pooping helps flush out bugs (aka virus, bacteria, pathogens). Water also helps your lymphatic system run smoothly and that's key for overall immunity. Water, water, water, people!



Wash your hands: I'm mildly obsessed with washing my hands because I touch my eyes and mouth a lot. So, I lather with soap and warm water frequently throughout the day. I talk more about hand washing dos and don'ts in my handwashing blog. It's pretty obvious we pick up germs from touching surfaces that have germs on them. That alone isn't too much of a problem, but it's when we touch our germ-y hands to our face (mouth, nose, eyes) that it becomes a pathway to illness.

Don't touch your mucous membranes: Like I said above, the mucous membranes are our gateway to accessing our insides. So, they provide a major point of entry for pathogens and viruses. Sometimes, we inhale certain viruses and there's not much we can do about that unless we want to walk the streets with respiratory masks on. And hey, if that's your thing, rock it. But we do have more control over keeping our hands away from those areas. How often do you scratch your nose or rub your eyes? Think about it! Every time there's a chance you're introducing a virus into your body. If you follow the above steps of hydrating and washing your hands at least you're giving your body a fighting chance. But, my simple rule of thumb is hands off the orifices when in public.

Probiotics: The good guys. Our bodies have 10 times more bacteria than cells. You could call us walking petri dishes. How awesome! Our microbiome (bacteria inside our bodies) is on the cutting edge of a scientific understanding of the link between our microbiome and overall health. 70-80% of our immunity happens in the gut. So, eating foods that have probiotics is key **Continued on the top right column...**

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to keeping that system in check. Try sauerkraut, kimchi or kefir (make sure they're actually fermented and not just pumped with vinegar and sugars). If fermented foods aren't your thing, try taking live/active multi-strained probiotic capsules that you find in the refrigerated section of health food stores.

Garlic and onions: No doubt these power foods have strong antimicrobial properties. In an ideal world, they would be eaten raw to provide the most benefit. However, I don't know very many people who are into chewing on raw garlic or onions. Cooking it will reduce some of the cold-fighting properties, but not all of it. So, I'd suggest you add it to your foods whenever you can. Try adding extra near the end of cooking so it's not cooked to death and zapped of all its vitamins.

[Read the entire article.](#)



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also may be experiencing the effect of cumulative stress. For a number of reasons, wintertime can be more stressful than summer. When stressors cumulate, they can create a chronic, low grade stress response in the body that depletes key nutrients, namely B12 and folate. These key nutrients can become depleted from [other life-style factors](#), as well. And they have been [shown in studies](#) to be low in depressive patients and to have an association to depression in the general population. In addition, they demonstrate an inverse relationship to [homocysteine](#), which is a key marker for inflammation and a number of disease risks.

Supplementing with B12 and folate is easy, but again, there is a huge difference between different formulations. Folate-rich foods include lentils, spinach, asparagus, broccoli, papaya, and collard greens. B12-rich foods include eggs, dairy products, fish, shellfish, red meat, poultry, and nutritional yeast. A professional will be able to guide you to the formulation that is best for you and will consider if you are not getting enough or if maybe your digestion or a dysfunctional gut biome is impairing your absorption of the nutrients you are consuming.

Last but not least, it's important to get enough essential fatty acids - those Omegas. Usually Omega 3's are the most essential for mood due to their importance in [brain health](#) and inflammation, but in a certain subset of people experiencing mood problems, the 6's are more important. It used to be thought that EPA was the most beneficial for brain health, but now studies are [hailing DHA](#). You will find these listed on the back label of the Omega 3 bottle. When used at therapeutic levels these can really help to offset inflammation and boost mood. Therapeutic dosing of Omega is generally considered between 1g and 10g per day and should be supervised by a professional if there are any contraindications or complex health issues, and just to ensure you get the best quality supplement that is sustainably sourced.

To beating the Winter Blahs naturally!

Turmeric Chai Latte [by Melanie Robinson, CHNC](#)

Ingredients:

- 1 tbspc coconut oil
- 1 medjool date, pitted
- 1/2 tsp honey (optional)
- 1/2 tsp organic turmeric powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp cardamom
- 1/2 inch fresh ginger root
- 1 tbspc hemp hearts
- 1 1/2 cups boiling water

Instructions:

Add all ingredients into a high speed blender and blend until smooth, about one minute. Pour into your favourite mug and enjoy!



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