

NUTRIENTS TO SUPPORT YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM DURING THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) PANDEMIC

A strong immune system can protect you and help you recover quicker from illness and infection. During COVID-19, it is especially important to support your immune system by eating a balanced diet. Research suggests that certain nutrients may play a key role in having a healthy immune system. These include:



DHA (an omega-3 fatty acid)
Sources include flaxseeds, anchovies, salmon and other oily fish



Vitamin A (including beta-carotene)
Sources include broccoli, carrots and sweet potatoes



Vitamin C
Sources include parsley, kale and strawberries



Vitamin D
Sources include tuna, mushrooms and fortified milk



Vitamin E
Sources include sunflower seeds, butternut squash and avocados



Folate or Folic Acid
Sources include lentils, spinach and oranges



Vitamin B12
Sources include chicken, tuna and fortified non-dairy milk



Vitamin B6
Sources include salmon, chicken, bananas, oatmeal and fortified tofu



Zinc
Sources include chickpeas, pumpkin seeds, almonds and yogurt



Iron
Sources include salmon, sardines, spinach and lentils



Copper
Sources include avocados, dark chocolate and sweet potatoes



Selenium
Sources include whole-wheat pasta, shrimp and cottage cheese

It is best to get these nutrients from real foods. If this is not possible, supplements may be necessary. For a stronger immune system, experts at the Linus Pauling Institute recommend individuals consider taking vitamin C, vitamin D, DHA (an omega-3 fatty acid) and zinc. Ask your health care provider if taking a supplement or multivitamin is an appropriate option for meeting your nutrient goals.

Multivitamin tips:

- Don't overspend. A higher price doesn't necessarily translate to higher quality.
- Pick the formulation specific to your needs. For example, some multivitamins are made for special populations including children, adults, men, women, pregnant women and seniors.
- Pick a multivitamin with as close to 100% of the Daily Value for all of the vitamins and minerals listed above. Your combined intake of zinc from food and supplements should not go over 40mg a day.
- Look for the USP or NSF seal to ensure quality testing.

