

FALL 2017

health | wellness | nutrition

WellLIVING



BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

Fall is the season of leaf changes, pumpkin spice everything and the beginnings of cold and flu season. One reason we tend to get sick more often during colder months is likely due to people spending more time huddled indoors and sharing germs. In general, your immune system does a fantastic job of defending you from disease-causing bacteria and viruses. But it could use a little extra boost during the season since your exposure to bad bugs is greater.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle will help you fight off or minimize impact of getting sick. This may sound very familiar from your doctor's office or health magazines, but a healthy lifestyle creates an excellent foundation for a strong immune system. Here are a few strategies that you can try this fall to boost your defenses.

Avoid smoking. Smoking causes damage to lung tissue and weakens the immune system. In fact, influenza risk is seven times higher and more severe in smokers than nonsmokers.

Eat a diet with fruits, vegetables, protein, healthy fats, and whole grains. A healthy diet will provide most of the nutrients that your body utilizes to keep your immune system strong. For example, beta glucans found in mushrooms and grains support immune cell function. Also, it may be a good idea to take a multi-vitamin if you aren't already.

If you drink, do so in moderation. Too much alcohol can significantly disrupt the immune defenses in your lungs and gastrointestinal tract, as well as impair immune cell function. Moderate drinking is defined as 3-4 alcoholic drinks per day for men and 2-3 drinks per day for women. One drink is equal to 12 fluid ounces of beer, 5 fluid ounces of wine, and 1.5 fluid ounces of distilled spirits.

Get adequate and quality sleep. Lack of quality sleep suppresses immune system function. Practicing good "sleep hygiene" includes getting at least 7-8 hours a night, avoiding screen time (TV, smartphones, computers, e-readers, etc.) 2-3 hours before bed, and sleeping in a dark and cool room. *Cool tip:* if you rely on screen time before bed, try wearing amber colored glasses to block blue light from devices, which can disrupt the body's natural sleep cycle.

Hand wash regularly. There is some debate about whether or not sanitizing our living and work spaces with antibacterial products is good or bad for our immune systems. However, frequent hand washing with plain soap and water is an effective way to minimize the spread of bad bacteria without killing off our good ones.

SPICE UP YOUR FALL

Fall is a wonderful harvest season for plenty of fruits and vegetables, such as apples and pumpkins. It's also a great time to experiment with spices and herbs! They provide flavor and aroma, stir up old memories, and have some great nutritional and health benefits too! Try out some of these favorite spices and herbs in your kitchen.

CINNAMON Did you know that there are over 100 varieties of this quintessential fall spice? In the United States, we primarily use Cassia cinnamon for its sweet and spicy aroma. Cinnamon contains antioxidants, controls inflammation, increases digestive fluid secretions, and may help regulate blood sugar. Nutritionally, it is a source of calcium, manganese, dietary fiber, and iron.

TURMERIC This golden spice is a staple in Middle Eastern and Indian cuisine. The root is packed with antioxidants. It contains a substance called curcumin, which is known to promote liver function, heart health, and may halt the progression of colon cancer. Turmeric is rich in vitamin B6, potassium, magnesium, iron and beta-carotene.

ROSEMARY A fragrant evergreen native to the Mediterranean, the many benefits of rosemary include improving memory and focus, removing toxins (diuretic), antibacterial, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and improving digestion. It contains vitamins A, B (particularly folate) and C, as well as iron.

GINGER This root is classically used to aid in digestion and help with nausea. It also has anti-inflammatory properties, which may help reduce pain associated with arthritis. Ginger is a source of magnesium, vitamin B6, copper, potassium, and manganese.

OREGANO Originally used by the Greeks as a medicinal herb, oregano is used to treat colds, bloating, and menstrual cramps. It also touts antibacterial (especially as an oil) and anti-inflammatory properties, as well as protecting against cancer. Oregano contains iron, manganese, vitamin E, iron, calcium, and vitamin K.



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Well **FIT**

Summer tends to be synonymous with outdoor fun and exercise. With spring showers moving out and sunny weather moving in, it makes perfect sense that we all look forward to it. But some people would say that fall is really the best season to be outside and move around. *Here are some of the top reasons why fall is awesome for fitness:*

1 The air is cool and crisp. You're less likely to end up in a puddle of sweat after your hike or basketball game. Also, exercising in cooler weather can help you feel invigorated, burn more calories, and boost endurance performance.

2 Less traffic at gyms, courts, and trails. Most people's schedules fill up this time of year with work, school and family activities, so popular workout spots tend to be less crowded. This makes it easier to focus on your activity of choice and find more enjoyment. It might be easier to find parking nearby, too!

3 Themed events are everywhere! Turkey trots, corn mazes, haunted trails, costume races, zombie runs – there are lots of family-friendly activities to enjoy. Even if you're single, you and your friends may get a kick out of doing something quirky and outside of your usual routines.

4 Seasonal produce picking. Have you ever gone to an apple orchard or a pumpkin patch? You spend a lot of time walking around, picking fruit, carrying around baskets (or kids) or pulling a loaded Radio Flyer wagon – that means you're burning calories! And the best part is that you go home with seasonal treats to eat or decorate.

5 Fight off seasonal depression. Some people have a hard time adjusting to the change in seasons due to less sunlight and cold weather that triggers the urge to hibernate. But spending some time outside during what little daylight hours you have can help keep your mind sharp and reduce the symptoms of seasonal depression by increasing your body's production of vitamin D.

5
reasons
FALL
is the best
for fitness

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**SEPTEMBER
IS
NATIONAL
YOGA
AWARENESS
MONTH**



One of the first yoga studios in the United States was established in California in 1947. Now there are more than 30 thousand studios and 36 million Americans practicing yoga!

The great thing about yoga is that it's not just an exercise program, but also a system that you can use to create more harmony and reduce stress in your life. Yoga meets you where you are mentally, emotionally, and physically. Whether you're in a great mood or feeling stressed out, a few minutes of yoga can help you feel more connected to others or balance you out.

Yoga is adaptive to your body type, level of physical strength and flexibility. Many poses can be easily modified so that you can choose what feels best for your body. For example, use props such as a bolster, block or a pillow to rest your chest and head when stretching the outer hip in pigeon pose. Being an adaptive practice, yoga gently encourages you to challenge yourself so as not to induce physical harm or injury. However, it pushes you just enough to create space for mental growth and to build strength.

When surrounded by other like-minded people in a room, practicing yoga can feel almost therapeutic and grounding. After some instruction and with some discipline, a solo practice can also feel rewarding, as you are able to turn more inward and focus on your body's unique challenges and triumphs.

Yoga offers a variety of health benefits including improvement with chronic back pain, depression, diabetes, asthma, weight loss, heart disease and stress management. In schools, mindfulness practices (which include yoga) have been shown to reduce burnout in teachers and reduce stress and increase brain activity in students. Have a simple yoga routine in the workplace can help boost your productivity, improve concentration, and decrease headaches.

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? – NUTRITION@LPMHCI.COM

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