

## Pathway to Health & Wellness

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### **Maintain Healthy Habits to Improve Your Immune System**

Habits are a funny thing, changes in our routine can interrupt them, and boy have we all had changes to our routine. Don't ignore the obvious health habits that can keep your immune system strong so you can fight off the Covid 19 virus.

#### **Eating Habits**

With new daily routines your eating habits may have changed. Since you're home more, it's easier to snack, or maybe you're baking more. If you're a stress eater, you may be eating more in general. Beware that you don't gain the Covid 19, that is 19 pounds while you're home waiting for this epidemic to end. Try to eat as you have, or if needed improve your eating habits. To keep your immune system healthy, eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, they give you immune boosting vitamins and minerals.

#### **Immune Boosting Foods**

Citrus fruits

Berries

Dark leafy greens

Mushrooms

Orange vegetables, like carrots and sweet potatoes

Broccoli and other Brassica vegetables, like cauliflower, Brussel sprouts and cabbage

Spices, especially garlic, turmeric and ginger

Fermented foods, such as yogurt, kombucha and miso

Home-made chicken soup, research shows it works

#### **Stress**

Stress reduces your body's ability to fight off infections, so find ways to decrease your stress level. Exercise is one of the best ways to do that, but your usual exercise routine may be disrupted. This is an opportunity to start a new routine, maybe you need to get up earlier than your kids to fit in exercise, or try a new type of exercise. Even just walking outside is good exercise, and you may see neighbors you can talk to while maintaining social distancing. In fact, social interaction is good for the immune system too according to the American Psychological Association.

A lot of the stress we experience involves the way we respond to a situation, how you think about it. Therefore, you can control your stress level by controlling your thoughts. Meditation is a powerful tool to help you take command of your thoughts. Meditation practices vary, so search Google to find a method that works for you. Simply breathing mindfully is a great start. Many of us use alcohol to reduce our stress, but too much will weaken your immune system. If you drink, do so in moderation; no more than one drink per day for women and two for men.

#### **Sleep**

Finally, don't underestimate the power of sleep to keep your immune system strong. Again, habits play an important role in quality sleep. As your daily routine and habits may have changed due to Covid 19,

your sleep habits may have changed too. Try to go to bed at the same time and get up at the same time each day. You probably know how much sleep you need, for most people it's between 7 and 9 hours.

Stay safe and stay healthy, start a new healthy habit today.