

FOODS THAT SUPPORT YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM



A truly healthy immune system depends on a balanced mix of vitamins and minerals over time, plus normal sleep patterns and exercise.

BETA-CAROTENE: A powerful antioxidant that can reduce inflammation and support immune function by increasing disease-fighting cells in the body.

Examples: Sweet potatoes, carrots, and green leafy vegetables

VITAMINS C & E: These antioxidants destroy free radicals and support the body's immune response.

Vitamin C Examples: Red peppers, oranges, strawberries, broccoli, mangoes, lemons, spinach, kale, and Brussels sprouts

Vitamin E Examples: Almonds, peanuts, hazelnuts, sunflower seed, spinach, and broccoli

FOLATE/FOLIC ACID: Both relate to vitamin B-9, which plays a key role in preventing birth irregularities and aiding with the production of healthy red blood cells.

Folate Examples: beans, peas, green leafy vegetables,

Folic Acid Examples: Fortified foods such as enriched breads, pastas, rice, and other 100% whole-grain products

IRON: Helps the body carry oxygen to cells, comes in different forms.

Examples: The body can more easily absorb "heme iron", abundant in lean poultry such as chicken and turkey, and also found in seafood. Other forms of iron are in beans, broccoli, and kale

VITAMIN D: Reduce the risk for viral infections, including respiratory tract infections, by reducing production of pro-inflammatory compounds in the body.

Examples: Fortified foods such as milk, orange juice, and cereals, plant-based milks, fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, tuna, and sardines)

SELENIUM: Potential to slow the body's over-active responses to certain aggressive forms of cancer

Examples: Garlic, broccoli, sardines, tuna, Brazil nuts, and barley.

ZINC: A mineral that can help boost white blood cells, which defend against invaders.

Examples: Oysters, crab, lean meats and poultry, baked beans, yogurt, chickpeas, nuts, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, beans, and lentils



Greater Cleveland
Food Bank