

Wellness Wednesday



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The Best Foods To Boost Your Immune System

Eat yourself to good health.

With fears about the coronavirus spreading, the least we can do is try to keep ourselves as healthy as possible. In other words, we all need to be boosting our immune systems.

One of the best ways to do that is to make sure you're including immune-boosting foods into your daily diet. We've rounded up nine great immune-boosting foods — in no particular order — plus recipes so that you can get as many of them into your diet as sounds good to you.

Stay healthy, and eat well.

1. Red Bell Peppers

These sweet peppers are an excellent source of vitamin C — even better than oranges. Luckily, they're just as sweet as the citrus fruit. Stock up to keep your C levels whenever you can to stay healthy.

2. Citrus

Vitamin C, vitamin C, vitamin C. Eat grapefruits, oranges, clementines — they'll all give you a healthy dose, as well.

3. Garlic

Garlic contains selenium, which seems to have a powerful effect on immune systems. And since garlic is a fragrant addition to any meal, there's no reason you shouldn't be eating more of the stuff. Get the garlic recipes you've been missing.

4. Chicken Soup

Don't ever underestimate the restorative powers of homemade chicken soup. There's science now that backs up this old home remedy. If you're starting to feel under the weather, make yourself a batch of soup and feel quickly restored. Store bought will do in a pinch, too.



5. Broccoli

This vegetable is loaded with vitamins A and C, as well as the antioxidant glutathione. It's no wonder that your mother was always telling you to eat it.

6. Almonds

These tree nuts are full of vitamin E, which are a powerful antioxidant that can help fight off infection. A handful of almonds should do the trick, but what's the fun in that? Cook with them instead.

7. Turmeric

This bold yellow spice might not be the superfood we all hoped it was, but there is anecdotal evidence that it may help fight a cold. Turmeric is known in the health food world as the great anti-inflammatory, responsible for easing minor maladies such as upset stomachs to more heroic acts, such as lowering the chances of heart attacks.

8. Spinach

They don't call this leafy green a superfood for no reason. It's full of iron, folate, fiber, antioxidants and vitamin C. Cook and eat all the spinach you can with [these spinach recipes](#).



9. Yogurt

Probiotics are your best friend when it comes to staying healthy. Naturally found in yogurts, they not only make for a healthy breakfast but may help ease colds, as well.

Other Immune Boosting Tips

Exercise regularly

You already know this, but regular exercise lowers blood pressure, improves your cardiovascular system and generally contributes to good health, which also strengthens your immune system.

Don't smoke

Smoking impairs the immune system in a few different ways. It can weaken your immune system's defenses, making you more susceptible to infection, and can also make your immune system more likely to develop harmful pathogenic immune responses.

And because the novel coronavirus is a respiratory illness, smoking can exacerbate the risk of contraction, according to Stanton A. Glantz, the director of the Center for Tobacco Research Control & Education.

Drink in moderation

Excessive drinking impairs your immune system, making you more susceptible to infections.

Get enough sleep

Almost no one sleeps enough, even though a sleep-deprived immune system doesn't work as well as a well-rested one.

Try to minimize stress

I know, I know: this is a tough one right now. But lots of research shows that stress can compromise immune systems. So if you can find ways to calm down and introduce some self-care into your routine, you'll be better off.

Also, another finding from that research is that healthy and robust social contact can benefit your health. So seeing friends is a good way to combat stress.

In order to stave off coronavirus, here are your best bets:

Wash your hands

It's both the easiest and the most important way to protect yourself. There are even helpful sing-alongs, now!

Don't touch your face

Yes, once you hear this you just want to keep touching your face. But the World Health Organization says that hands can easily pick up infections — that's why washing them is so important — and the face, eyes, and nose are quick ways for the virus to enter your body.

Cover your mouth when you sneeze

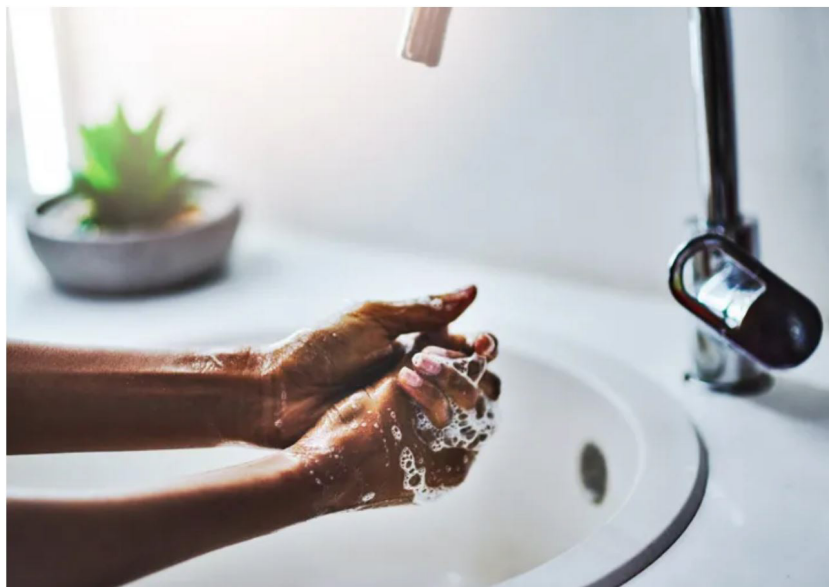
Droplets spread the virus, so make sure to contain them by coughing or sneezing into your elbow.

Stay home if you feel sick

That's the most effective way to stop the virus from spreading.

Wear a mask

Now they are saying if you have to go out wear a cloth mask covering your mouth and nose, this will help protect you and others from contracting or spreading the virus.





BABY PASTA SHELLS WITH ASPARAGUS & MARINARA SAUCE

283 Calories | *PREP TIME: 10 mins* | *COOK TIME: 5 mins* | *TOTAL TIME: 10 mins* | *TOTAL TIME: 15 mins*
YIELD: 4 Servings | *COURSE: Dinner* | *CUISINE: Italian*

INGREDIENTS

8 ounces baby pasta shells, or small gluten free pasta

1 bunch thin asparagus, tough ends removed

1 1/2 cups quick marinara sauce, or jarred

1/4 cup Pecorino Romano

salt and fresh pepper to taste

Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 1/4 cups, Calories: 283 kcal, Carbohydrates: 52g, Protein: 11g, Fat: 3.5g, Fiber: 4g

Source: Skinnytaste.com

Baby Pasta Shells with Asparagus and Marinara Sauce is a quick and easy 4-ingredient pasta dish, perfect for Spring. Ready in under 15 minutes and under ten dollars to make.

TIP: A light vegetarian pasta dish the whole family will enjoy using pantry staples like pasta and marinara. You can use any small pasta shape you wish or swap the pasta for farro.



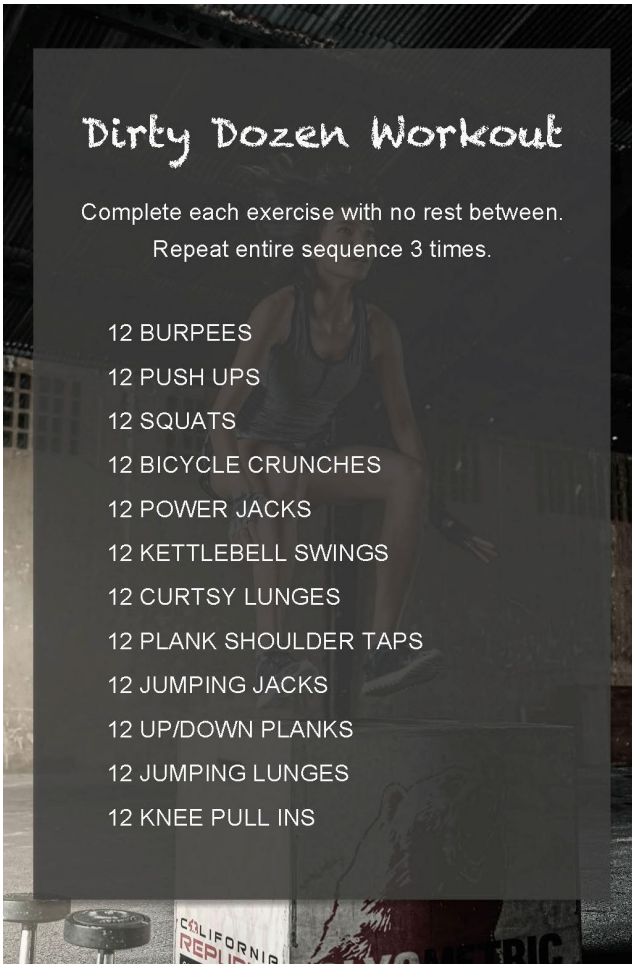
INSTRUCTIONS



Asparagus is in season, and I'm probably the only one in my house who truly loves it, so to get everyone else on board requires some work (or sneaking into their food). Chopping it real small and combining it with cute little pasta shells which hug each bite of asparagus works perfect!

- 1.) Boil about 4 inches of water in a large pot, when boiling add asparagus and cook about 2 to 3 minutes, or until tender crisp. Drain and chop into small bite sized pieces.
- 2.) Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil (you can use the same pot from the asparagus not to dirty too many dishes). Cook pasta according to package directions for al dente.
- 3.) While pasta is cooking, in a medium saucepan heat 1-1/2 cups marinara sauce. Drain pasta and RESERVE a cup of the pasta water.
- 4.) Return pasta back to the pot and toss with marinara, asparagus, grated cheese, salt and pepper and a 1/4 cup of the pasta water or as needed to loosen the sauce.
- 5.) Divide between four bowls and top with fresh pepper and more grated cheese if desired.

FEATURED EXERCISE

Dirty Dozen Workout Routine 

Sometimes the hardest part about working out is designing your workout routine. Well look no further, this dirty dozen workout will give you a full body strength workout while getting your cardio in at the same time. The secret is not resting between exercises, this will boost your heart rate and keep it there. Furthermore, this workout was designed to allow one muscle group to rest while working a different one. This increases the effectiveness of the workout without increasing time spent working out. Perfect for your busy life.

Equipment: 1 Kettlebell


What to do: Perform each exercise for 12 reps. Do not rest between exercises. Repeat entire sequence 3 times.

SOURCE: <https://www.experimentsinwellness.com/workout-routine/>

Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



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