

**Diet  
Nutrients**

**Stress  
Management**

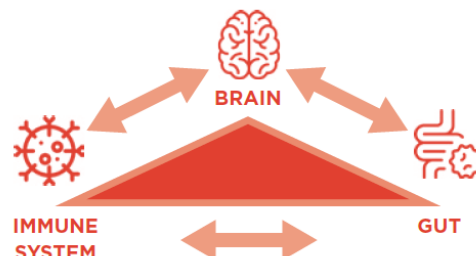
**Sleep  
Rest**

**Other  
Support**

## Super charge your Immune System

... to make your body and soul smile through the winter!

There are several areas you can take action on to strengthen your immune soldiers. By working on all areas, you will create the strongest army. As you can see in the triangle diagram, Brain and Gut are inseparably linked to Immune function. So here are our top tips:



### GUT: Diet/Nutrients

- **Choose for a clean, whole foods diet – organic as much as possible**

The immune system, just like other body systems, needs nutrients to function well. Vitamin D, zinc and vitamin A are an important trio for good immune strength. Avoid toxins (pesticides) to make sure your immune system recognizes food as food and does not have to use its capacity on toxins creating a danger/stranger situation. Also make sure you drink enough clean water, a healthy body is well hydrated.

- **Reduce your sugar/refined carbohydrate intake**

Sugar weakens our immune system. Blood sugar dysregulation 'steals' your energy, causes oxidative stress, can impair your sleep and affects your mood. (Daily recommended maximum: 6 tsp for women, 9 tsp for men). Sugar hides in many things, check your food and drink labels!

### BRAIN: Stress management

- **Develop a habit of using stress management techniques**

Stress causes the brain to signal production of cortisol and **cortisol suppresses the immune system**, i.e. it's putting your immune soldiers to sleep! Find something that works for you, e.g. [breathing techniques](#), going for walks in nature, gratitude, putting your bare feet on grass or soil, meditation (check out [free apps](#)), ...

- **Eat in a relaxed state of mind: take some deep belly breaths before you eat** (e.g. [box breathing](#))

Good digestion is key for the body to make use of the nutrients from good food choices and good digestion is dependent on energy flowing to the digestive organs when you eat. This only happens when you are in a rest and digest nervous system mode (vs. in a fight or flight mode which will direct the energy to the extremities, away from the digestive organs). Good digestion is also key for avoiding food sensitivities which when you have them occupy a good portion of your immune soldiers and cause cortisol to rise, which – remember – suppresses your immune system!

### IMMUNE FUNCTION during Sleep

- **Prioritise sleep: go to bed on time to allow for 7 hours of sleep or more**

The importance of sleep as an important pillar for good health is greatly underrated. Sleep is the time for the body to repair, restore, replenish and detoxify. **During sleep cortisol should be low, melatonin should be high.** With low cortisol your immune system can work at full strength and melatonin has important immune modulating properties. Check recommended sleep duration per age group [here](#).

- **Develop good sleep hygiene habits for sound sleep quality**

Avoid screen time at least one hour before bed (blue light emitted from the screens fools the body into thinking it's time to be awake), don't have mobile devices in your bedroom, keep the bedroom dark (melatonin is only created sufficiently in darkness), pay attention to temperature and noise levels. Avoid stressful activities in the evening, anything that can raise your cortisol levels (e.g. paying bills, responding to emails, stressful conversations, ...)

## OTHER SUPPORT

- **Get moving to stimulate lymph flow**

The lymphatic system is the circulatory network of our immune system and it does not have a pump like our blood circulation does. Movement and muscle contraction support lymph flow. Remember that exercise should be appropriate for your body, over exercising puts the body under stress, which raises cortisol, which suppresses the immune system! An interesting read [here](#) including additional tips for good lymph flow.

- **Choose wise supplement support**

- **Vitamin C**

"Vitamin C contributes to immune defense by supporting various cellular functions of both the innate and adaptive immune system." [Source](#)

- **Magnesium**

Magnesium is our relaxation mineral and it's also critically important to convert vitamin D into its final form hence we recommend to start this about 5 days prior to introducing vitamin D to replenish it first. [More](#)

- **Vitamin D**

"Vitamin D helps the immune system stay balanced, much like a gymnast walking a balance beam". [Source](#)

- **Zinc**

"Zinc is known to play a central role in the immune system, and zinc-deficient persons experience increased susceptibility to a variety of pathogens." [Source](#)

- **Quercetin**

"Quercetin has been shown to reduce viral internalization and replication in vitro, and viral load, lung inflammation and airways hyper-responsiveness in vivo." [Source](#)

- **Omega 3**

"This family of polyunsaturated fatty acids exerts major alterations on the activation of cells from both the innate and the adaptive immune system." [Source](#). It also has important anti-inflammatory properties.

## One-stop shop option to make it super easy for you

[Click here to find our recommendations](#) for these supplements all in one place. In our selection we took into account different quality markers (well absorbed forms of active ingredients, allergy information, purity) as well as price in order to give you good value for money options. **For more info also** [read the supplement Q&A](#).

**The quantities in the recommendation will last for 2 months for one adult or 1 month for 2 adults.**

**Use this coupon code to save 15% on your order: IPP15%** (expires 30 November 2021)

**If you would like more personalised support to build resilient health, don't hesitate to contact us at [www.functionalmedicine-europe.com](http://www.functionalmedicine-europe.com). We invite you to join our community [here](#).**

