



Boosting your **Immunity** before winter

by Ananda Russ

Your immune system is a collection of cells and proteins that work to protect the body from harmful micro-organisms, such as bacteria, viruses, and fungi. It also plays a role in the control of cancer and is responsible for the phenomena of allergy, hypersensitivity, and rejection after transplant surgery.

How does your immune system work?

The term innate immunity is given to the protection that we are born with, such as the skin and the mucous membranes that line the mouth, nose, throat, intestines, and vagina. It also includes antibodies, or immunoglobulins (protective proteins), that have been passed to the child from the mother. If micro-organisms penetrate these defences, they encounter "cell-devouring" white blood cells called phagocytes, and other types of white cells, such as natural cell-killing (cytotoxic) cells. Micro-organisms may also meet naturally producing substances (such as interferon) or a group of blood proteins called the Complement System, which acts to destroy the invading micro-organisms.

The 2nd part of the immune system, adaptive immunity, comes into play when the body encounters organisms that overcome the innate defences. The adaptive immune system responds specifically to each type of invading organism, and retains a memory of the invader so that defences can be rallied instantly in the future.

The adaptive immune system first must recognize part of an invading organism or tumour cell as an antigen (a protein that is foreign to the body). One of 2 types of response – humoral or cellular – is then mounted against the antigen.

Humoral immunity is important in the defence against bacteria. After a complex recognition process, certain B-lymphocytes multiply and produce vast numbers of

antibodies that bind to antigens. The organisms bearing the antigens are then engulfed by phagocytes. Binding of antibodies and antigens may activate the complement system, which increases the efficiency of the phagocytes.

Cellular immunity is particularly important in the defence against viruses and some types of parasites that hide within cells, and, possibly, cancer cells. It involves 2 types of T-lymphocytes: helper T-cells, which play a role in the recognition of antigens and activate the cytotoxic T-cells or killer cells, (the 2nd type of T-lymphocytes), which destroy the cells that have been invaded.

Disorders of the immune system include immunodeficiency disorders and allergies, in which the immune system has an inappropriate response to usually innocuous antigens such as pollen.

In certain circumstances, such as after tissue transplants, immunosuppressant drugs are used to suppress the immune system and thus prevent rejection of the donor tissue as a foreign organism.

How do you boost your immunity?

Exercise, your state of mind, and your diet all play a part. Overtraining or vigorous exercise actually suppresses the immune system. Calming rather than stressful forms of exercise are probably best for immunity. This may be because corticosteroids, substances produced by the adrenal



glands as a response to stress (and also taken as the drug cortisone), suppress the immune system. This too may be a key explanation for numerous studies, which have found that low psychological states such as stress, depression, and grief depress the immune system.

Learning how to cope with stress, deal with psychological issues, and relax is an important part of boosting the immune system.

Your immune strength is totally dependent on an optimal intake of vitamins and minerals. When you have a predominantly (75-80%) raw fruit and vegetable diet, you are way ahead of the average person, because of the availability of vitamins & minerals in fresh fruit and vegetables.

Stay away from sugar and refined carbohydrates, which rob your body of nutrients.

Eat good, whole, organic food and try to eat as vegetarian as possible. If you absolutely cannot and do not want to cut out meat or animal products, limit those to once a day, or even better, two to three times a week.

Stop Smoking

The main harmful effects of smoking are lung cancer, bronchitis, emphysema, coronary artery disease, and peripheral vascular disease. Smoking also increases the risk of mouth cancer, lip cancer and throat cancer. Smoking is extremely harmful during pregnancy. Babies of women who smoke are smaller and are less likely to survive than those of nonsmoking mothers.

Children with parents who smoke are more likely to suffer from asthma or other respiratory disease. There is also evidence that passive smokers are at an increased risk of tobacco related disorders and also suffer discomfort, in the form of coughing, wheezing, and sore eyes.

Tobacco contains many toxic chemicals. Nicotine is the substance that causes addiction to tobacco. It acts as a tranquillizer but also stimulates the release of adrenaline into the bloodstream. This can raise blood pressure. Tar in tobacco produces chronic irritation of the respiratory system

and is thought to be the major cause of lung cancer.

Carbon monoxide passes from the lungs into the bloodstream, where it easily combines with haemoglobin in red blood cells, interfering with oxygenation of tissues. In the long term, persistently high levels of carbon monoxide in the blood cause hardening of the arteries, which greatly increases the risk of coronary thrombosis.

What else can I do?

AIM's range of products are perfectly poised to help and support your immune system, if you need some extra help and want to stay away from the doctor during the winter months. The main immune building products are as follows:

The Garden Trio: (BarleyLife; Just Carrots & Redibeets) take one teaspoon of each in the morning, half an hour before food to gain the fantastic synergy of the trio working together. They compliment each other perfectly. Just add exercise for perfectly healthy cells leading to a strong immune system!

Bear Paw Garlic: take one – two capsules daily as this is a natural, broad-spectrum safe antibiotic. It enhances your immune system, repairs body tissue & reduces inflammation.

Proancynol 2000: take two capsules per day, best taken with meals. It is a unique formulation of 7 powerful antioxidants to help fight free radical damage in the body. It is a great aid in helping to maintain your immunity.

Complimentary products:

Ginkgosense: take one capsule with water or juice daily, can be taken with your Garden Trio. Provide additional antioxidant protection against free radical damage.

Florafood: take one capsule with meals twice daily with 240ml of water for maintenance, best taken with meals. Help to maintain digestive health by balancing intestinal pH, as well as stimulating and enhancing your immune system.