



# HEALTH CENTRE

## Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune

How to improve your immunity during COVID-19 Pandemic :

### **Four factors that affect immunity:**

1. Nutrition
2. Exercise
3. Sleep
4. Stress

### **NUTRITION:**

#### **Carbohydrates:**

Eat low Carbohydrates diet to control high blood sugar and Blood Pressure. Added sugars and refined carbs may contribute disproportionately to overweight and obesity. Obesity may likewise increase your risk of getting severely sick.

Limit your sugar intake to less than 5% of your daily calories. This equals about 2 tablespoons (25 grams) of sugar for someone on a 2,000-calorie diet.

#### **Proteins:**

Increase the protein content of your food. Non Vegetarians should include more eggs, poultry, fish and lean meat in your diet. For vegetarian people pulses like Mung, lentils or Masur, Rajma, Chole, Tur dal, Chickpeas or green peas, Cowpeas or Chawali, MothBean or Mataki are very good sources of protein. Also milk and milk products like cottage cheese or paneer are good sources of proteins.

#### **Healthy Fats:**

Healthy fats found in olive oil, fish like salmon, Mackerel or Bangda, Tuna or Khupa and flax seeds are rich in omega 6 and may boost your body's immune response to pathogens by decreasing inflammation and may help your body fight off harmful disease-causing bacteria and viruses

#### **How to improve your Gut Microbiome**

Whole plant foods like fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and legumes are rich in nutrients and antioxidants. The fibre in plant foods, feeds your gut microbiome or the community of healthy bacteria in your gut. A robust gut microbiome can improve your immunity and help keep harmful pathogens from entering your body through your digestive tract

Prebiotic and Probiotics containing foods like yogurt, fermented food, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, ginger, cardamom, milk, curd, tofu, turmeric powder are also excellent sources to rejuvenate the composition of gut bacteria, which is vital for nutrient absorption by the body.

#### **Other Important food items to boost your immunity:**

1. Eat dark-green leafy vegetables, seasonal fruits, foods rich in Beta Carotene (carrots), Ascorbic acid & other essential Vitamins.
2. Eat natural immunity supplements include ginger, gooseberries (amla), turmeric, which helps in boosting immunity.

3. Seeds like sunflower, flax, pumpkin, melon seeds and nuts like almond, walnuts, pistachio are excellent sources of protein and vitamin E.
4. Eat a lot vitamin C rich foods like lemon, tomatoes, amla, grapes, blueberries, cranberries, strawberries and mint-fresh berries daily.
5. Include these anti-oxidant rich foods like cantaloupe or Kharbuj, papaya, citrus fruits, apples, cocoa, dark chocolate, green tea, cruciferous vegetables like cauliflower and cabbage, carrots, kiwis, onion, beetroots, mushroom, yellow pumpkin, capsicum, sweet potatoes in your diet.

### **Hydration: Keep yourselves hydrated**

Drink up to 8-10 glasses of water every day including fresh juices made of citrus fruits, lemon water and coconut water to beat the heat.

### **EXERCISE:**

Moderate exercise can boost immunity. Exercise regularly for 30 to 45 minutes to improve metabolism which has a direct correlation with body immunity. Exercises that can be done at home without any equipment are Suryanamaskar, Pushups, Squats, high knees, Lunges, burpee's, etc.

### **SLEEP:**

- Get enough sleep
- Sleep and immunity are closely tied. Inadequate or poor quality sleep is linked to a higher susceptibility to sickness.
- Getting adequate rest may strengthen your natural immunity. Also, sleeping more when sick allows your immune system to better fight the illness.
- Adults should aim to get 7 or more hours of sleep each night, while teens need 8-10 hours and younger children and infants up to 14 hours.
- If you're having trouble sleeping, try limiting screen time for an hour before bed, as the blue light emitted from your phone, TV, and computer may disrupt your circadian rhythm, or your body's natural wake-sleep cycle

### **STRESS:**

- Long-term stress promotes inflammation, as well as imbalances in immune cell function.
- Activities that may help you manage your stress include meditation, exercise and yoga.

### **AVOID:**

1. Avoid Smoking, vaping (vapour produced by an electronic cigarette), drinking alcohol and other addictive substances as this may reduce your immunity.
2. Avoid all kinds of non-essential travels.

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