

WINTER HEALTH



Our immune system does a fantastic job fending off viruses but we must make sure it has everything it needs to run effectively. Winter brings an increased risk of infection so you need to make sure you have the best defence system possible going into the colder months.



Why should I care about winter health?

In the winter you are more likely to catch a cold, flu or similar infection. Besides the unpleasant symptoms that we are all familiar with, your performance will suffer and you may be unable to train or compete. It is important to minimise training days lost to illness.

But I have had the flu jab so I'll be ok... right?

The winter months are when we are most susceptible to picking up infections. While the flu jab protects you from the flu, this infection is just one of many lurking around. So even if you have had the flu jab, it is still vital that you take other steps to protect yourself from infections and illnesses this winter.



Top tips

- ✓ Get the flu jab – make an appointment with your local SIS office.
- ✓ Keep your hands clean – wash them regularly and apply hand sanitiser often.
- ✓ Keep your water bottle clean – avoid sharing with others.
- ✓ Make sure you get enough good quality sleep.
- ✓ Ensure your nutrition supports recovery after sessions – see our post-training fact sheet for more information.
- ✓ Keep your immune system in tip top condition.



What can I do to help my immune system?



A well balanced diet is important for your health and well-being all year round. However, as winter brings an increased risk of catching a cold or flu, certain nutrients are of particular importance.

Probiotics

Consuming a probiotic drink daily (e.g., Yakult or Actimel) can reduce your risk of picking up some infections and they help keep your gut healthy.

Turnover to read up on some more tips to boost your immune system this winter.



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Vitamin C – can reduce duration of the common cold & helps iron absorption.

Amount – 40 mg daily normally | 250-1000 mg daily for effect on common cold.

Sources – 1 orange: 80 mg | 2 kiwis: 70 mg | 1 cup mixed berries: 35 mg | 1 red pepper: 200 mg | ½ cup cooked kale: 45 mg | 80 g of steamed broccoli: 50 mg



Selenium – influences inflammation and immune responses.

Amount – Females: 0.060 mg daily | Males: 0.075 mg daily.

Sources – 5 brazil nuts: 0.06 mg | 1 cup of prawns: 0.04 mg | ½ cup cooked crab meat: 0.07 mg | ½ cup lentils: 0.04 mg | 2 eggs: 0.02 mg | small tin of tuna: 0.05 mg



Iron – involved in the development of immune cells that fight infection.

Amount – Females: 25 mg daily | Males: 15 mg daily.

Sources – 2 Weetabix: 3.8 mg | Med bowl fortified bran flakes: 6.8 mg | 1 cup stewed beef mince: 4.7 mg | 10 dried apricots: 3.4 mg | 2 tbsp. liver pate: 3.1 mg | ½ tin baked beans: 3.2 mg | 10 cashew nuts: 1.1 mg | ½ cup cooked lentils: 3.6 mg



Zinc – can reduce the duration of common cold symptoms.

Amount – Females: 7 mg daily | Males: 9 mg daily 75 mg daily for effect on common cold.

Sources – 5 oysters: 30 mg | 1/3 cup wheat germ: 5.2 mg | slice of liver: 8 mg | 1 beef steak: 5 mg | 1 ovaltine drink: 4 mg | 2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds: 1.6 mg



Vitamin D – may reduce incidence of the common cold and plays an important role in the immune system.

Amount – Latest information suggests 10 µg.

Sources – Sunshine | 1 salmon fillet: 12 µg | 3 sardines: 3 µg | 1 mackerel fillet: 7 µg | 2 eggs: 3 µg | fortified spreads and cereals)



Summary

Boost your intake of vitamins and minerals now to maintain your health during the winter. Eat a wide range of fruit and veg. Include some of the sources of nutrients above in your daily intake.

Further Information

If you notice any cold or flu like symptoms, contact your local SIS office to make an appointment with a Doctor.