

# Make Your Body a Fortress and Keep the Flu Away

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Everywhere you go, you hear everyone from teachers to politicians saying “wash your hands,” “use hand sanitizer when you can’t wash,” “cough into your arm,” and “don’t come to work or school if you are sick.” While this advice is completely appropriate, these well-intentioned individuals are missing a very important part of the equation to prevent infection.

Why do we get sick? Many people think it is because of all the “bugs” that surround us. These people are fearful of others who are sick believing that illness comes from outside. While it is medical fact that bacteria, viruses, and fungi are the cause of infections, it is our less than healthy bodies that allow them in. Why does one child catch colds all the time, while another can go a whole season without a single runny nose? If a person’s body is truly healthy, then it is like a fortress, it can block the attack and prevent infection.

So, how do we make our body a fortress?

A simple way to start is to focus on increasing those things that will be good for our bodies, while removing those things that are toxic. No matter how much good we put into our bodies, it cannot heal if we are constantly exposing it to imbalances, threats and toxins.

Here are some steps you can take to help your family become better infection fighters:

**Eat Whole Foods.** Whole foods are as close to nature as possible. Eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Other examples of whole foods are nuts, seeds, eggs, meats, fish and whole grains. Look for a variety of colors in your foods.

**Buy Organic.** Organic foods are higher in nutrients and trace minerals, and free from pesticides, fungicides, and synthetic fertilizers. Cows raised on organic farms are healthier, not given antibiotics, and are not exposed to growth hormone, making their meat and dairy more nutritious and less harmful.

**Limit Sugar.** Sugar consumption has a significant detrimental effect on our immune systems, and children especially eat far too much sugar. Sugar is found in virtually every processed food, as well as in many foods that are thought to be healthy, such as chocolate milk, juice, cereal, ketchup, and granola bars. For five hours after eating sugar, immune systems are challenged, making it easier for viruses and bacteria to attack. Sugar also inhibits the body’s absorption of many vitamins and minerals. Sugar also affects blood vessels and increases the risk of heart attacks. The American Heart Association recommends a daily sugar limit for heart health: 25mg/day for women, 37mg/day for men. Extrapolating to children, would suggest no more than 15mg of added sugar per day – that’s about 4 tsp, the amount in a ½ can of pop. Look at labels and stop buying foods that have sugar, high fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, glucose, sucrose, or fructose in the first three ingredients. Avoid artificial sugar substitutes too, as these are toxins.

**Drink Water.** Water is essential to all living things. Water helps to hydrate and cleanse our bodies. Filtered water is the healthiest. Even 100% fruit juice is full of sugars, devoid of most

nutrients, and high in pesticides if not organic. The American Academy of Pediatrics places a limit of 4 oz of juice a day (one juice box.) One of the best techniques for families, regarding pop, juice, and sugar drinks, is to just not buy it. Don't have it in your home. If it is not there, they can't drink it. You are your child's best role model and if you want them to do something, you must do it too.

**Increase Vitamin D**, because vitamin D deficiency decreases immunity. Vitamin D comes from the sun and from few foods, such as fish. Dairy is a poor source of vitamin D. 1 tsp of cod liver oil provides 400iu vitamin D/tsp, which is the RDA, but many people need much more vitamin D to raise their level enough to increase their immunity and to prevent chronic illness. This is especially true in the winter.

**Avoid Fast and Fried foods.** These are high in trans fats and omega 6 fatty acids, and low in nutrients. Shocking to some, school lunches are quite unhealthy, much closer to fast food than being a nutritious boost for children's brains. Limit school lunches to once a week or less.

**Increase Omega 3 Fatty Acids.** An imbalance of omega 3 to omega 6 ratio causes inflammation, increasing susceptibility to illness. The standard American diet (SAD) is high in omega 6s and low in omega 3s. Cod liver oil is an excellent source of omega 3s. Other sources include grass fed beef, raw nuts and seeds, and fish. Since fish are so contaminated, children should not eat fish more than once a week. Smaller fish like sardines and anchovies are the safest.

**Take Probiotics.** As reported in the journal, Pediatrics, giving children a daily probiotic has been shown to be a safe and effective way to reduce the incidence and duration of fever, runny nose, and cough, as well as decreasing the need for antibiotics.

Homeopathic remedies, like **oscillococcinum**, help support the body in prevention of the flu, as well as at the first sign of illness. Belladonna 6C or Ferrum Phos 6C can help the body temper a fever without eliminating it. Over-the-counter medicines (like Motrin and Tylenol) stop the body's natural response to infection and thus have been shown to prolong the overall course of illness. In multiple studies, Tylenol has been strongly associated with increased asthma risk and, when given to people colonized with clostridia difficile, Tylenol may trigger neurologic damage.

**Think** twice before getting a flu vaccine. The flu vaccine is, at best, only 33% effective in preventing the flu in children over 2 years old, and even less in the elderly. Minimal testing has been done on flu vaccines and NO long-term studies have been done to prove their safety. The flu vaccine (multi-dose) contains mercury – each dose contains 250x more mercury than what the EPA approves as “safe.” Kids with asthma who received flu vaccines had triple the likelihood of hospitalization than those who did not receive a flu shot.

**Make health a priority.** Start with small changes and add more over time. **Remember that each step you take will help your family be stronger and more able to resist infection. Realize that each healthy choice made now will make a huge difference to your families' future health, happiness, and longevity. Start today!**