



## Immune Support

The cold and flu season is a time when we should all reflect on what we are doing (or could be doing), to help support our immune systems to get into top condition to fight off the inevitable onslaught of seasonal coughs and colds. This is especially important if you already have a health condition which might be impairing your immune system function, or increasing your risk of complications from chest problems. It's also worth remembering that the things you can do to help protect you from seasonal viruses, can also help to keep you generally fitter and optimise general wellbeing.

No matter where your starting point is, simple changes can help all of us to improve health and wellbeing. At the clinic, our doctors and team of Nutritional Therapists and Health coaches can work with you to optimise health with a truly holistic approach. While we can personalise this advice according to your needs, the following principals are generally helpful for everyone remember:

### **Find the Diet which works best for *your* Immune System:**

We encourage everyone to aim for an unprocessed, whole foods diet with plenty of bright colours (containing antioxidant Phytonutrients), alongside plenty of vegetable fibre to feed the healthy gut bacteria. Reduce sugar and refined carbohydrates in favour of boosting the intake of healthy fats and diverse protein sources including nuts, seeds and oily fish.

If there is a particular food that doesn't suit your body, then try cutting it out completely. If you are unsure, then work with a Nutritional Therapist to find the source of food-related inflammation. Your immune system will work much better against pathogens if it's not constantly engaged in a battle with what you eat.

If you have a Nutritional plan and don't feel it's working for you, or you need fresh motivation and encouragement, then do book an appointment with one of our expert Nutritional Therapists, who will be happy support you and help you to optimise your diet plan.

### **Get Enough Sleep:**

Aim for at least 7-8 hours, longer for athletes and those with fatigue. Help your brain to switch off for the night by avoiding screen use or wearing 'blue-blockers' for the 2 hours before bed. Try reading a book or take a relaxing bath with some magnesium salts to help you wind down in the evening. Help your circadian rhythms by keeping to a consistent bedtime.

If you are struggling with sleep, then check out our other suggestions in our Functional Foundation Pack or ask a member of the team to assist you.

### **Relax and get some 'Me Time':**

Our culture of constantly being 'on the move' often views relaxation as something selfish or unworthy. But our lives and work are often full of stress and constantly 'feeling busy' can raise cortisol and prevent our immune system from preparing to defend us.

Try to do something you enjoy each day and engage in a regular relaxation exercise for pleasure and to just 'let go' of any pressures from the day. You could listen to music, try an online meditation, take a yoga class or go for a walk in nature.

### **Movement Matters:**

For those fortunate enough to be able to expend energy on exercise, try to keep active and maintain fitness though the darker nights. If exercise has lapsed due to change in routines because of the pandemic, consider looking for an online class – or see what is once again on offer out in your local community again.

If your needs are to rest and conserve energy with gentle pacing, then do this – you will serve your immune system better by conserving energy at this stage in your healing journey.

## Nutritional Support:

We have put together some ideas on basic nutritional supplementation which can help to support your immune system. Most of the suggestions below are appropriate for everyone (although there are always exceptions).

### Vitamin D:

Vitamin D can help prevent upper respiratory infections by increasing the effectiveness of the immune response to viruses. As vitamin D is usually made in the skin by exposure to sunlight (and cannot be made between October to March in the UK), lower Vitamin D levels in winter are tied to seasonal flu and are also known to be associated with more severe cases of Covid-19.

We recommend a minimum of 4-5000iu per day for adults and 1-2,000 iu per day for children as a minimum during winter to maintain adequate levels. Plus, if there is exposure or on the onset of symptoms, adults can take 20,000 iu per day for 1 week for rapid immune support.

### Vitamin C:

Vitamin C can reduce the duration of cold symptoms if you've started taking it regularly before falling sick. This seems especially true for athletes and older people. At dose of at least 3-5 g/day (1-2g for children), is a minimum at the onset of viral symptoms.

At the onset of a viral illness, adults can also try really high doses – up to 10g over the course of the day), and continue for 3-4 days.

### Mineral Replacement:

Regular zinc and selenium are also important to correct immune function and most of our patients will be on a regular dose as part of their treatment plan. If you have any concerns about your dose, then do consult the clinic. 15-30mg per day can be used over winter for most adults.

## Anti-Viral Herbal Therapy:

There is no compelling evidence that any particular herbal remedy is effective in preventing or treating Covid-19. However, at the first signs of upper respiratory tract symptoms, there are herbs which may help to target winter viral illness if taken at an early stage.

The following remedies are known to support the immune system to fight related bacterial or viral infections and I feel they might warrant a personal trial. The one's I personally use with my family in winter for coughs and colds are:

**Black Elderberry** (Sambucol for children or Pukka's Organic Black Elderberry Syrup), can be used regularly for immune support as a preventative in winter (as per the instructions on the bottle), or at a higher dose to help support the immune response to an acute viral illness (10ml Three times a day).

**Allicin** (Allicin Max / Allimed): This active component from garlic (which is destroyed by cooking), is effective against a range of bacterial and fungal infections which may accompany viral infections of the upper respiratory tract. Safe and non-toxic, adults can take up to 12 capsules per day of Allicin Max (or three capsules of Allimed), starting from the onset of illness.

Alternatively, take 2 Allicin Max (1 Allimed), per day to strengthen protection against infections.

**Andrographis:** This Bitter herb has been used in traditional medicine for upper respiratory tract infections and has been shown to be better than placebo for symptomatic relief in acute respiratory tract infections. I like to have this in stock as part of my winter wellness treatments and will take it most winters if I can feel a cold coming on. Dose for adults 2 twice a day with water for up to 5 days. Has to be used as soon as symptoms start for effectiveness.

*Caution:* Adults only. Do not use in pregnancy or if you are on anticoagulant medications.

**Medicinal Mushrooms** (Pukka Mushroom Gold, Mushrooms 4 Life Mycomplex):

Medicinal mushrooms are rich in polysaccharides including beta-glucans which help to modulate the immune system if it is under, or over active. Beta-glucans enhance macrophage and natural killer cell function- two important cells for our defences.

Many mushrooms also contain a wide variety of compounds that are anti-viral, anti-inflammatory, and contain antioxidants to protect the body over the winter season.

## Sourcing Supplements

### My Functional Apothecary:

We have our own in-house supplement shop, [My Functional Apothecary](https://myfunctionalapothecary.co.uk/). Please feel free to browse our selected range of supplements. Links to the recommended products are also available here: <https://myfunctionalapothecary.co.uk/ImmuneSupport>

- 10% off your first order is available using the discount code **NEWCUSTOMER**.

<b>Vitamin D and Vitamin C Replacement Examples – Choose a format which will suit you best</b>				
<a href="#">BetterYou DLux (D3+K2)</a>	4 sprays			Spray into one cheek and hold for a few seconds (1 spray = 1000iu D3).
<a href="#">Cytoplan Vitamin D3 4000iu and K2 100ug 60s</a>	1			Take with food. Adults can take up to 5 per day for 1 week in acute illness.
<a href="#">Lamberts Vitamin C with Bioflavonoids 1000mg</a>	1		1	Adults can take up to 10g per day n acute illness for up to 5 days.
<a href="#">Biocare Vitamin C powder (60g or 250g)</a>	1/3 tsp		1/3 tsp	1/3 tsp=1g. Take in water or juice. Better for those with sensitive stomachs as less acidic.
<b>Mineral Replacement Therapy (or you may also have zinc or selenium in a Multivitamin format)</b>				
<a href="#">Lamberts Zinc Citrate 15mg</a>	1			Take with food
<a href="#">Lamberts Zinc Citrate 25mg</a>	1			Take with food
<a href="#">Lambert's Selenium 200mcg</a>	1			Take with food. Use for 2-3 months over winter only unless under nutritionist supervision.
<b>Winter Wellness Herbal Options – Prophylactic doses below with acute dosing strategies in the notes</b>				
<a href="#">Pukka Elderberry Syrup</a>	5ml		5ml	Adults with acute illness increase to 10ml three times a day for 5 days.
<a href="#">Mushrooms4Life Organic Mycomplex</a>	2			Up to 6 daily to suppress acute viral infection or to reduce chronic viral load.
<a href="#">Pukka Mushroom Gold</a>	2			Up to 6 daily to suppress acute viral infection or to reduce chronic viral load.
<a href="#">Allicin Max</a>	2			Increase to up to 12/day for acute infection.
<a href="#">Allimed</a>	1			Increase to up to 3 /day for acute infection.
<a href="#">Pukka Andrographis</a>	2		2	Take at onset of any respiratory symptoms. Continue 5 days.
<b>Options for children (recommended with a children's Multinutrient for mineral support)</b>				
<a href="#">Natures Plus Animal Parade Gold Chewable</a>	2			
<a href="#">Natures Plus Animal Parade Children's Chewable Vitamin C</a>	1		1	
<a href="#">Natures Plus Animal Parade Children's Chewable Vitamin D3 500iu</a>	2			