

# 15 FOODS

## that can help to boost your immune system

Right now, it's more important than ever to take care of ourselves.

When we're feeling stressed out, it's easy to seek comfort in certain not-so-good-for-us foods. Instead, one of the best things you can do is to nourish your body with immunity-boosting foods that will help you stay healthy and well.

To help you, we've created a list of the top 15 foods that can help to boost your immune system. The good news: they're all delicious, and you probably already have most of them in your fridge or pantry!





## 1. Citrus fruits

Citrus fruits are packed with vitamin C, which is thought to increase the production of white blood cells. This powerful vitamin is key to helping your body fight infections. Because your body doesn't produce or store it, you need daily vitamin C for continued health.

Our favorite immunity-boosting citrus fruits: oranges, tangerines, lemons, limes, and grapefruit.



## 2. Peanut butter

That's right, everyone's favorite nut-based snack is also an immunity booster! Peanut butter is packed with infection-fighting antioxidants including vitamin E, which is especially important in regulating and maintaining immune system function.

Try spreading it on toast for breakfast, or simply enjoy a spoonful any time of day for a delicious energy boost.



## 3. Tea

White, green, and black tea all contain disease-fighting polyphenols and flavonoids. These antioxidants work by seeking out and destroying cell-damaging free radicals.

Green tea also has high levels of epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), another powerful antioxidant that has been shown to enhance immune function.



## 4. Red bell peppers

Did you know? When compared ounce for ounce, red bell peppers actually contain twice as much vitamin C as citrus fruits! They're also a rich source of beta carotene, which helps to keep your eyes and skin healthy.



## 5. Ginger

Many people turn to ginger when they're feeling under the weather. Why? Ginger not only boasts many potent anti-inflammatory compounds, but it can also treat nausea, improve indigestion, and decrease bloating.



## 6. Turmeric

This bright yellow spice contains high concentrations of curcumin, a powerful anti-inflammatory compound which has been shown to boost immune cell activity and enhance antibody responses.



## 7. Spinach

Often hailed as a “superfood”, spinach contains many immunity-boosting properties. One of these is folate, which helps your body make new cells and repair DNA. Spinach also contains fiber, antioxidants such as vitamin C, and more. Enjoy your spinach raw or lightly cooked to get the biggest health benefits.



## 8. Sunflower seeds

Sunflower seeds are full of important nutrients, including phosphorus, magnesium, and vitamin B-6. They’re also incredibly high in vitamin E. Try lightly toasting them and sprinkling them over your favorite salad!



## 9. Garlic

Garlic is not only delicious, but it’s also a must-have for your health! When garlic is crushed, chewed or sliced it produces allicin, which has many immune-boosting properties. It’s been shown to boost the disease-fighting response of some types of white blood cells in the body when they encounter viruses.



## 10. Shellfish

Some types of shellfish—including crab, clams, lobster and mussels—are packed with zinc. Zinc is especially important for our bodies because it helps create and activate white blood cells involved in the immune response. It also assists your immune system with tasks such as healing wounds.



## 11. Yogurt

The “live and active cultures” found in many yogurts and other fermented products may stimulate your immune system to help fight diseases. Look for plain yogurts rather than flavored ones, as they can be loaded with sugar. You can sweeten plain yogurt yourself by adding healthy fruits and a drizzle of honey.



## 12. Broccoli

Broccoli is packed with vitamins A, C, and E, as well as many other immunity-boosting antioxidants and fiber. The key to unlocking all these powerful nutrients is to cook your broccoli as little as possible—or better yet, not at all.



## 13. Poultry

Poultry, such as chicken and turkey, is high in vitamin B-6 which is vital to the formation of new and healthy red blood cells. Chicken stock or broth also contains gelatin, chondroitin, and other nutrients which can be helpful for gut health and immunity.



## 14. Sweet potatoes

Sweet potatoes are a great source of beta carotene, which is a precursor to vitamin A. This nutrient aids the immune system by helping to produce white blood cells, which fight bacteria and viruses. Vitamin A also helps form the mucous membranes that line the respiratory tract, which acts as a protective barrier to keep germs out of the body.



## 15. Almonds

Almonds have high levels of vitamin E, which boosts the activity of immune cells to support the body's ability to fend off invading bacteria and viruses. A half-cup serving (about 46 whole, shelled almonds) provides nearly 100 percent of your recommended daily amount of vitamin E.

## Other tips to boost your immune system

Your first line of defense against illness and infection is to choose a healthy lifestyle. Why not also try out some of these immunity-boosting strategies?

**Don't smoke**

**Eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables**

**Exercise regularly**

**Maintain a healthy weight**

**If you drink alcohol, drink only in moderation**

**Get adequate sleep**

**Washing your hands frequently and thoroughly**

**Try to minimize stress levels.**

### More resources for you

For more quick tips, videos and downloadable resources to help you stay healthy and happy, visit <https://wecaretlc.com/resources/>.

Sources: Harvard Medical School, Healthline.com.