



Nature's Infection Fighters

Herbs and nutrition can help your body fight off any type of infection

Every time some new type of infection is discovered, many people get scared. This isn't surprising. The news media often plays upon people's fears of disease, reminding them of historical pandemics like the Spanish flu epidemic, which occurred over 100 years ago. Fears are also fueled by movies and TV shows depicting humanity being devastated by some plague. Films like *The Last Man on Earth*, *The Andromeda Strain*, *The Stand*, *12 Monkeys*, *Outbreak*, and *World War Z* are just few of the more popular films that feature a deadly plague wiping out most of humanity.

The plague scenario makes an exciting story, but it bears little resemblance to modern reality. It's true that a little over 100 years ago, infectious disease was the leading cause of death, but this is no longer the case. The primary reason for this is not vaccines, as many diseases for which no vaccines were ever developed have almost disappeared. It was primarily due to improved sanitation which has saved more lives than any other development.

It's also true that many people do die each year from various infections, such as the flu virus. But it is important to remember that most of these deaths occur in people who's immune systems have already been weakened by other health issues. This is why it is important to take care of your health and especially your immune system.

Even when plagues have occurred in the past, not everyone gets sick. This is because a healthy immune system has the ability to adapt and protect you. So, rather than worrying about the latest microbe, why not concentrate on keeping a healthy immune system and learning how to fight infections naturally. That's the focus of this issue of *Sunshine Sharing*. In it you'll learn how you can support your immune system and enhance your body's ability to fight infection and how to help your body recover if you do become sick.

Nutrition and the Immune System

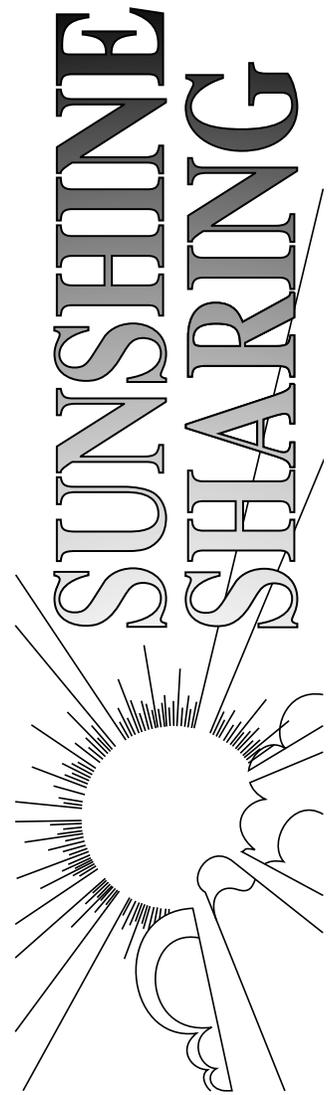


Nutrition plays a large role in immunity. This was demonstrated by the work of Dr. Weston Price, who toured the world in the 1930s studying indigenous people and civilized people living in the same part of the world. He assessed both their diets and their health and discovered that native people were largely immune to many of the infections that plagued civilized people living in the same region.

Dr. Price concluded that this had to do with the nutritional density of the foods they were eating. Native people were getting ten times more fat-soluble vitamins and macro minerals in their diet, along with four times more water-soluble vitamins than their civilized counterparts eating their refined and processed foods. Dr. Price wasn't testing for trace minerals, such as zinc, copper, or selenium, but based on studies showing the decline of these minerals in modern diets, it's likely these native people were getting ten times more of these nutrients as well.

So, if you want to avoid being sick, eat nutritionally-dense, whole, natural foods, instead of refined sugar, white flour, white rice, refined vegetable oils, and other processed foods. In addition you can supplement your diet with immune boosting nutrients. It's especially important to do this during the winter months or when some new infection is going around.

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Your guide to better health the natural way.

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Important Notice

The information in *Sunshine Sharing* is for educational purposes only and should not be used to diagnose and treat diseases. If you have a health problem, we recommend you consult a competent health practitioner before embarking on any course of treatment.

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Fat-soluble Vitamins

The most important supplements for a healthy immune system are the fat-soluble vitamins A, D3, and K2. Dr. Price helped cure many people by giving them cod liver oil (rich in vitamin A and D) and spring butter from grass fed cows, which supplements vitamin K2 (a nutrient Dr. Price called Activator X because it had not been discovered at the time). These vitamins are essential to keeping mucus membranes healthy so microbes can't get into the body in the first place. They're also essential for the immune system so it can fight infections, particularly viral infections.

A good dose of vitamin D3 to take for maintenance during the winter months is 50-100 mcg (1-2,000 I.U.). You can have your D3 levels checked (about 80% of the population is deficient) and take larger amounts, 125-350 mcg (5-10,000 I.U.), if your levels are low. You can take a higher dose, until levels return to normal. As for vitamin A, a good dose would be about 3,000 I.U. daily, while a good dose for K2 is about 45 mcg a day.

Vitamin C

Vitamin C is also helpful in boosting immunity. Many people find that high doses of vitamin C (2,000 to 5,000 milligrams) help them avoid colds and flu and recover more quickly from viral infections. When taking vitamin C in larger doses, it's important to take bioflavonoids with it as they work synergistically with vitamin C.

Zinc

Zinc is helpful for inhibiting viral replication and supplementing with it has helped people both prevent and recover from viral infections. It's important not to overdo it with zinc as taking too much of any isolated mineral will throw other minerals out of balance. You can take 20-30 milligrams per day for a few days at the beginning of symptoms, but a maintenance dose is going to be more like 5-15 milligrams daily.

It also helps to take zinc with a zinc ionophore, a substance that helps zinc get inside the cell where it works to inhibit viral replication. Two natural ionophores are quercetin and epigallocatechin-gallate (EGCG) which is extracted from green tea. Quercetin is found in many foods naturally high in vitamin C, including apples, onions, red grapes, and citrus fruits. You can also supplement with about 500 milligrams two or three times a day.

Natural Sanitation



Improved sanitation is the primary reason deaths from infectious diseases have dramatically declined in the last 100 years. Everyone can help prevent the spread of infection by washing their hands after going to the bathroom or before handling

food and keeping their environment clean. However, it isn't necessary to disinfect everything.

We are constantly surrounded by microbes and our immune systems learns to differentiate harmful microbes from innocuous ones through regular, low level exposure. Children who grow up

on farms with dirt and animals generally have stronger immune systems than children growing up in disinfected homes. Children who don't have natural exposure to microbes are also more likely to develop allergies, asthma, and other problems involving an immune system that overreacts to minor irritations.

Natural Disinfectants

Many commercial disinfectants are toxic with long-term use, but there are two good natural disinfectants you can use that aren't toxic and don't over-sterilize the environment and weaken the immune system. One is vinegar. Vinegar kills harmful bacteria without any toxic effects and can be diluted in water and used to disinfect household surfaces.

There are also many essential oils that are antimicrobial and can be added to natural soaps to provide a stronger disinfectant action. Some of the better oils for this purpose are pine and lemon. Other useful disinfectant oils include tea tree, eucalyptus, cajeput, thyme, and oregano. Add about 2-3 teaspoons of essential oil to one pint of an unscented natural soap to make a disinfectant cleaner.

Silver and Infection Prevention

During the plagues of the middle ages members of the nobility had lower rates of infection than the common folk. One theory suggests that this was because the nobility of the time ate and drank using utensils and cups made out of silver, silverware. Doing this led to ingesting so much silver that it gave their skin a slightly blue cast, hence the term blue blood. Pioneers would also add silver coins to water barrels to keep the water from going bad.

In our modern world, colloidal silver can also be a helpful antimicrobial agent. It works best when it can come into direct contact with microbes. Use silver gel as a natural hand sanitizer or to prevent infection in wounds. Gargle with silver for sore throats, use as ear drops for ear infections, or spray up the sinuses for sinus infections.

Natural Disease Prevention



One of the ways in which natural infection fighters really shine is in their ability to strengthen the body's natural defenses. This means that they up-regulate immune responses to prevent disease and not just treat it. The remedies in this section can

help you avoid getting sick in the first place and increase your ability to recover if you do.

Essential Oils for Prevention

There's a popular story about four thieves who used a vinegar extract of certain aromatic herbs to protect themselves while robbing a victim of the black death epidemic. A variety of recipes of herbs and/or essential oils have been created out of this story. It's also true that Native Americans burned aromatic herbs to purify their environment.

There is a truth behind these practices. Essential oils kill airborne microbes when infused into the air in parts per million. So, a good way to prevent the spread of infection is to diffuse essential



oils into the air in your home a couple of times a day during the winter months when people are shut indoors. Good oils for this purpose include eucalyptus, pine, fir, spruce, cajeput, tea tree, myrrh, lemongrass, lemon, rosemary, and lavender.

You can also use these essential oils to make a disinfectant spray to carry with that you can mist around your face when traveling to prevent the spread of airborne microbes. Combine 3/4 cup of pure water with two Tablespoons of vinegar or glycerine and add 30 drops of any of essential oils previously mentioned. Put this in a spray bottle and shake thoroughly before using. You can also add colloidal minerals to the spray.

Astragalus

If you tend to get sick in the wintertime, astragalus has long been used as a tonic for the lungs to fortify them against the cold, dry air of wintertime. Astragalus can help to prevent and fight viral infections such as colds, flu, COVID-19, shingles, and mononucleosis. It can also help with respiratory problems like bronchitis, asthma and dry coughs. Take 2 or 3 capsules three times a day during the winter months.

Echinacea

Echinacea is known as a powerful immune stimulant. In addition to activating the immune system to make a person less susceptible to contagious disease, it also helps prevent the spread of infection. Although commonly used for viral conditions, it actually works better on bacterial infections. It can be helpful for blood poisoning, strep throat, tonsillitis, infected wounds, scarlet fever, and other serious infections.

For prevention take 1-2 capsules per day during cold and flu season. For fighting active infections take 2 capsules three or four times daily. You can also use 30-60 drops of a liquid extract three to six times a day. Echinacea works best when doses are spaced about 3-4 hours apart. Combine with red root for lymphatic infections; baptisia for infections with a foul odor; and goldenseal for GI tract infections.

Medicinal Mushrooms

Many mushrooms, such as reishi, maitake and cordyceps also have the ability to act as non-specific immune stimulants. The beta-glucans in mushrooms enhance natural killer cell (NK) activity, which helps the body destroy cells infected with viruses. Take 2 capsules of a blend containing several varieties of medicinal mushrooms two or three times daily to boost your immune system to fight bacterial and viral infections. You can also add powdered mushrooms to soups and broths during the winter months to help prevent illness.

Natural Infection Fighters

The discovery of antibiotics has saved many lives, but the overuse of antibiotics has led to the rise of antibiotic resistant bacteria. Overuse of antibiotics also disrupts the intestinal microflora caus-

ing yeast overgrowth, leaky gut, and SIBO, all of which ultimately weaken the immune system.

Given these problems and the fact that antibiotics only work on bacterial infections they should be reserved for serious bacterial infections and avoided with all viral infections. Most sinus infections, ear infections, and bronchial infections are viral or fungal rather than bacterial and could be better treated with herbs, such as the ones listed below, which often work on all three types of infections—bacterial, fungal, and viral.

Garlic

Garlic is one of nature's most potent (and inexpensive) natural antibiotics. When you crush raw garlic, an enzyme called allinase creates a compound called allicin, which is antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal. Crushed fresh garlic is particularly helpful at fighting infections in the digestive tract and lungs. Unfortunately, allicin degrades rapidly, so dried garlic powder doesn't work very well as an infection fighter, although it still has many benefits for the cardiovascular system.



Garlic is particularly helpful for respiratory or GI tract infections, and can also be applied topically to prevent infection in wounds. Eat 1-2 cloves of freshly crushed garlic twice daily with some type of food to avoid digestive upset. One way to ingest it is to put it on crackers or toast with a little butter. Another way to get it down is to blend 2 cloves in a pint of water with a Tablespoon of honey and one whole peeled lemon.

You can get garlic tablets that contain allicin in a stabilized form. They are coated with chlorophyll to reduce the odor. One tablet is equivalent to one clove of crushed raw garlic, so take 1-2 tablets twice daily. You can also give 20-30 drops of garlic oil to children. Garlic oil can also be rubbed on the chest for respiratory infections.

Herbs with Berberine

Berberine is an alkaloid found in many herbs traditionally used to fight infections. Herbs containing berberine include goldenseal, Oregon grape, barberry, amur cork tree, Chinese goldenthrum (coptis), and yellow root. Any of these herbs can be applied topically to infected wounds or taken internally for fungal or bacterial infections in the GI tract, lungs, or urinary system. Because over-harvesting has endangered goldenseal use Oregon grape or barberry wherever possible. You can also find isolated berberine as a supplement.

Andrographis

Andrographis has been used in Ayurvedic medicine for diarrhea, dyspepsia, malaria, pneumonia, and tonsillitis. Research has shown that extracts of andrographis inhibit a variety of bacteria including *E. coli* and *Staphylococcus*. They also help shorten the recovery time for viral infections like colds, flu, sinus infections, earaches, and sore throats. It has also been used to combat Lyme disease. Take 20-40 drops of the tincture three or four times a day or 1-2 capsules two or three times a day.

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Elderberry

One of the most popular antiviral herbs is elderberry. Research has shown that elderberries inhibit the replication of viruses inside the cell, thus helping bring the infection under control. Elderberry can be used to prevent and treat most cold and flu like viruses and combines well with immune boosting nutrients like vitamin C and zinc. Take 2 capsules or about 30 drops of a liquid extract three times daily at the first sign of infection.



Oregano

Oregano is a broad-spectrum antibacterial and antifungal agent. It is helpful for respiratory infections where there is excess mucus production and GI tract infections with bloating and bad breath. It is also helpful for yeast overgrowth in the small intestines. Oregano can be taken in capsules or as a tea or tincture. The essential oil can be used internally, 1-2 drops diluted in one Tablespoon of olive oil or coconut oil, taken twice daily for no more than two weeks.

Tea Tree and Cajeput

Both tea tree and cajeput are trees in the *Melaleuca* genus. The leaves were traditionally used by aboriginal people to heal cuts, wounds, and skin infections. The essential oils from both species are great topical disinfectants and can be applied neat or slightly diluted to wounds, burns, and other damaged skin to prevent infection and speed healing. They can be inhaled for respiratory infections or diffused to help reduce the spread of infection. To use internally for yeast or bacterial infections dilute 1-3 drops diluted in olive oil, coconut oil, or honey and take once or twice daily for no more than two weeks.

Myrrh

Myrrh has been used for thousands of years to treat infection and was used in the Egyptian's embalming process. It is a helpful

remedy for infections in the gums, mouth and throat: gingivitis, canker sores, and sore throats. It has also been used for skin infection and vaginitis. Dilute a few drops of the essential oil in water containing a small amount of alcohol and use the mixture as a gargle or mouthwash. You can also use the tincture of myrrh topically or take 15-30 drops internally three times a day to help fight bacterial infections.

Pau D'Arco

Pau d'arco bark contains naphthaquinones which are antimicrobial, antifungal, and antiviral. It helps regulate the intestinal flora and is very helpful for chronic fungal infections and vaginal yeast infections. Take 2-3 capsules three times daily. It also works well as a decoction. Put 4-6 teaspoons of the bark in one quart of water, simmer for 15 minutes, let stand for 15 minutes; and then drink one cup two or three times daily. You can also take 20-50 drops of the tincture two or three times daily or apply it topically for skin infections.

Usnea

Usnea is a lichen, which is a combination of algae and fungi functioning as a single organism. It has been used for over 1000 years by Native Americans to fight infections. Usnea contains usnic acid, an antibacterial compound that works against both gram positive bacteria and gram negative bacteria. It is also antifungal and can be used for ringworm, athlete's foot, trichomonas, and candida.

Additional Help and Information

Nature provides many other natural infection fighting herbs such as lomatium, propolis, yerba mansa, lemon balm, and thyme. For more information about using natural remedies to prevent and fight infection contact the person who gave you this newsletter. You can also consult the following resources:

Strategies for Health by Steven Horne

Herbal Antivirals by Stephen Harrod Buhner

Herbal Antibiotics by Stephen Harrod Buhner