



# Wellness Update July (2) 2013

## by Susan Hanly - Naturopath

### Winter Wellness

#### Winter Is Coming

Are you at the mercy of winter each year? Do those dreaded colds and flus leave you and your family with runny noses, coughs, sore throats, headaches, fevers and fatigue through the winter months? These symptoms are often the leading cause of time away from school and work. Now is the perfect time to boost your immune system and defend against cold and flu symptoms. Remember, prevention is always better than cure.

#### Sharing, Not Always Caring

If you frequently catch colds and flus, it may be that your immune system is out of balance and making you more susceptible to catching infections that are all too often shared around at this time of year. If you have nutritional deficiencies or a poor diet, stress, inadequate rest or a lack of exercise; your immune system may not be primed to recognise and respond to the viral and bacterial invaders responsible for infection.



#### Which Bugs Bug You?

Viruses, such as Rhinovirus, are the common cause of colds and flus, rather than bacteria, despite common thought. Antibiotics target bacteria and are not effective against viral infections and the common cold. Luckily, there is natural support for your immune defences against both viruses and bacteria so they won't keep bugging you and making you sick.

#### Winter Warriors - The Natural Kind

If sneezing and wheezing, coughs and sore throats are common visitors at your house, do yourself a favour and prime your immune defences to protect you against viral and bacterial

intruders. Key herbs and nutrients play a crucial role as natural winter warriors helping to protect you and your family this season:

- Andrographis: This immune herb given at 6 g has been shown to be as effective as paracetamol for reducing fever and sore throat. Together with Zinc and Picrorrhiza, Andrographis may also help to reduce duration of illness.
- Elderberry is an excellent herb to help reduce flu symptoms such as fever and runny noses.
- Cordyceps, Coriolus and Reishi are medicinal mushrooms that specifically target virally-infected cells, often the cause of those winter colds and flus. These medicinal mushrooms can be taken both acutely and also for chronic infections, to help get restore a healthy functioning immune system.
- Zinc, Vitamin D and Vitamin C: These key nutrients are all important to help reduce the severity and duration of illness, whilst also supporting your immune system to function optimally.

#### The Gut - Your Link to Immunity

Did you know that 70 to 80% of your immune system is actually located in your digestive system? Understanding this will emphasise how important it is to look after your gut health. Your diet and the overall functioning of your digestive system will affect your immune system. Probiotics not only help with digestion, but there are also key probiotics that help your immune system. The beneficial strains, Lactobacillus acidophilus NCFM, Lactobacillus rhamnosusHN001 and Bifidobacterium lactis HN019 have been shown to help boost your immune system function.

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I have seen numerous patients who repeatedly got colds despite taking supplements who had an incredibly positive response to doing my detox program. The detox program is not unpleasant or difficult to do but can help get your immune system but up to scratch very effectively. It is also very useful as a general cleanse.

### Eating To Stay Well Through Winter

Healthy eating plans are essential throughout winter to help strengthen your immune system. Maintaining good nutritional status can help keep you healthy and reduce your risk of getting sick, as well as aiding faster recovery.



- Eat seasonally, fresh and organic as much as possible.
- Eat a well-balanced Mediterranean style diet with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, seeds, fish and lean meats.
- Reduce inflammatory foods that can suppress immune function and are mucous-forming, such as dairy, sugar, white breads, cakes and soft drinks.
- Try a hot fresh lemon, garlic and ginger tea with a dash of honey, or thyme tea to soothe a sore throat.
- Drink plenty of water, a minimum of eight glasses per day, and avoid excessive alcohol and caffeine.
- Take time to rest and relax, and get a good night's sleep.

### Welcome Winter With Wellness

Don't be at the mercy of this season's colds and flu. By acting now and boosting your immune system to prime it against common invaders, you too can get through these winter months without suffering at the hands of the common cold or flu. If someone has already started kindly 'sharing' their bugs, immune herbs and nutrients and a healthy diet will also help you by reducing the severity and duration of illness. Let's look forward

to winter this year and welcome it in a state of wellness.

Talk to me today about strengthening your immune system this winter.

### Inaccurate and Unhelpful Report

You may have seen an article in the media recently about Omega 3 supplements increasing the risk of prostate cancer. Please ignore this article as it was not properly conducted research. Many of the men were not even taking Omega 3 supplements. It was more an observational study as opposed to correct research. There would have been other factors affecting these men that were not taken into account or discussed. It is basically scaremongering.

### Therapeutic Goods Administration Changes

Thank you to all those of you who responded to my urgent call for help regarding the proposed changes to the regulation of Naturopaths by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Hopefully there was enough of a response by the public to make them reassess the absurd changes they were proposing which would have severely hampered and inhibited the way we practice and treat our patients. The proposed changes would potentially have had a negative effect on your health. We now wait to see what the TGA do next. I will keep you posted.

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