

Nutrition News

for Seniors



Provided by the Nutrition Division of the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services

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Protect Your Health with Immune-Boosting Nutrition

Good nutrition is essential to a strong immune system, which may offer protection from seasonal illness, such as the flu, as well as other health problems including arthritis, allergies, abnormal cell development and cancers.

Help protect yourself against infection and boost your immunity by including these nutrients in your eating plan.



Protein is part of the body's defense mechanism. Eat a variety of protein foods, including seafood, lean meat, poultry, eggs, beans, peas, soy products and unsalted nuts and seeds.

Vitamin A helps regulate the immune system and protects you from infections by keeping skin and tissues in your mouth, stomach, intestines and respiratory system healthy. Get this immune-boosting vitamin from foods such as sweet potatoes, carrots, kale, spinach, red bell peppers, apricots, eggs or foods labeled vitamin-A fortified, such as milk or cereal.

Vitamin C protects you from infection by stimulating the formation of antibodies and boosting immunity. Include more of this healthy vitamin in your diet with citrus fruits like oranges, grapefruit and tangerines, or red bell pepper, papaya, strawberries, tomato juice or foods fortified with vitamin C, such as some cereals.

Vitamin E works as an antioxidant, a substance that protects cells from toxic effects, and may improve immune function. Include vitamin E in your diet with fortified cereals, sunflower seeds, almonds, vegetable oils (such as sunflower or safflower oil), hazelnuts, peanut butter or spinach.

Zinc helps the immune system work properly and may help wounds heal. Zinc can be found in lean meat, poultry, seafood, milk, whole grain products, beans and nuts.

Other nutrients, including vitamin B6, folate, selenium and iron, as well as probiotics, also may influence immune response.

Source: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, www.eatright.org, Reviewed February 2013

Food in Focus: Beans - Pantry Staples, Nutrition Stars!

Beans are a tasty, nutritious and economically efficient way to meet nutrition needs year-round. It's time to hop aboard the bean bandwagon because beans are high in protein and soluble fiber and a good source of vitamins and minerals.

Diets rich in soluble fiber are associated with improved blood glucose control and blood cholesterol levels, and may help fight heart disease.



Since they are often priced at less than 25 cents per cup, dried beans provide very affordable options. Beans can be a part of any meal or snack. Recipes for bean dishes such as rice and beans, bean soups and chilies and even dips are commonly found right on the label of the can or package. While cooking with dried beans is a healthier choice, canned beans now come in low-sodium varieties. If you can't find them, simply rinse the beans under cold water to wash away up to 40 percent of the sodium.

Source: Adapted from Food & Nutrition Magazine, September/October 2013

In the Kitchen: Black-Eyed Pea, Tomato & Egg Salad

In the South, black-eyed peas, also called cow peas, are traditionally eaten as the first food of the new year to bring luck and prosperity. Try this quick and easy recipe that serves one.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup no-salt-added black-eyed peas, cooked
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped tomatoes
- 1 hard-boiled egg, chopped
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon reduced-fat feta cheese

Mix all ingredients and enjoy.



Nutrition Facts: Calories 219, Total Fat 7g, Saturated Fat 2g, Cholesterol 189mg, Sodium 195mg, Total Carbohydrate 27g, Dietary Fiber 5g, Protein 12g, Potassium 657mg, Phosphorus 156mg.

Source: Food & Nutrition Magazine, September/October 2013

Bean Variety Word Jumble: Can you unscramble these nutrition stars?

1. KLACB _____
2. YENOB SA _____
3. VYNA _____
4. CLAKB-DYEE ASEP _____
5. AMIL _____
6. HACPEIKC _____
7. TREGA THORNNER _____
8. TIPNO _____
9. DIYNEK _____
10. VAAF _____

- Answers:**
1. black
 2. soybean
 3. navy
 4. black-eyed peas
 5. lima
 6. chickpea
 7. great northern
 8. pinto
 9. kidney
 10. fava