

Under Chef’s Hat: Immune Boosters



Joseph Stephens
Chef

With the snowy winter weather comes the dreaded cold and flu season. Many of us will hope and pray that we don’t succumb to the viruses spreading around us, because once the cold or flu enters the household it may get us.

Everyone seems to have their own type of home remedy for dealing with winter illness once it strikes, some may choose lots of rest and others may pay a visit to their doctor or pharmacy for some over the counter treatments. But rather than dealing with illness, wouldn’t it be great to minimize or avoid getting sick all together?

Next to daily walks or mild exercises, here are a few concrete suggestions that will help boost your immune system:

Stomach: Oregano oil can improve gut health and boost your immune system. It acts kind of like a weed killer by helping eliminate some of the bad bacteria that may be dominating your digestive system.

Colds: Mushrooms, whatever variety you choose- enoki, shiitake or oyster-japanese mushrooms are a great immunity booster. They are also loaded with ergothioneine a powerful antioxidant, that does not get destroyed during the cooking process.

Liver: Liver support is necessary to make sure it’s able to detoxify as much as it can and provide a good environment for immune cells that live there. Cruciferous vegetables such as kale, broccoli, lettuce and cabbage support the liver and immune function by boosting the liver’s ability to flush out toxins.

Adrenals: Adding Avocados to your diet is an easy way to support adrenal function and health and keep your immune system happy. Avocados contain essential amino acids, antioxidants and some healthy fats to help balance hormone production.

Lungs: According to ayurvedic traditions, ginger warms the body and helps to break down the accumulation of toxins in the organs, particularly in the lungs and sinuses. Ayurveda also believes that ginger helps cleanse the lymphatic system, which is our body’s sewage system.

Garlic is a powerful natural immune booster! This is because garlic has amazing anti-microbial properties, meaning it kills harmful bacteria and prevents their growth, which is crucial to a healthy immune system.

As always: Hydrate! Hydrate! Hydrate

Once again: Please, do not make any changes to your diet without consulting your healthcare team.

Body Mechanics: Concentrated Triceps Extension

Within the Christie Gardens exercise program we always try to target “problem areas” of the body in order to strengthen those weaker muscles which may cause joints problems.

This triceps extension exercise is a great example as it not only works the back of the upper arms, but it also helps to strengthen the rear deltoids and mid-back muscles, thereby targeting those “weak spots”.

What more could you ask for in an exercise!

Jeff Dubé, BSc, PTS, ATC
Fitness Program Coordinator



- 1 While sitting upright in a chair, extend the legs , loop the exercise band under the feet while positioning the elbows high and wide, as seen on the diagram.
- 2 Keeping the elbows in position, extend the arms until they are straight, hold for a second and return to neutral. Repeat as a set 10 times.
- 3 It is important to note that the back remains straight throughout, and the shoulders are set back. This will accentuate the contraction of those mid-back muscles.

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wellbeing news, advice, and opinions from christie gardens staff and residents

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Editor-in-Chief:
Heather Janes

Design and Art Direction:
Diana and Jim Sweatman

Contributors:
Jocelyn Alves, Jeff Dubé, Lisette Purre, Diana Sweatman, Jim Sweatman, and Joseph Stephens.

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christie
30 gardens
years
a community you can have faith in
winter 2018

Get to the Core: Fitness Essentials

JANUARY
26
2018

A presentation by Jeff Dubé, Fitness Program Coordinator
Christie Gardens Auditorium, Lower Level
Friday January 26th, 12:15pm

Join Jeff and learn about the importance of strength, agility, balance, and nutrition – and how they relate to improved health.

What makes the Christie Gardens fitness program unique? Come and find out!



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Your Immune System

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Immune Boosters

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IN DEC 2017
CANADIANS
AGED 65+
ACCOUNTED FOR
68%
OF HOSPITALIZATIONS
DUE TO INFLUENZA

50-90%
OF ADULTS
ARE VITAMIN D
DEFICIENT

VITAMIN D
RDI FOR SENIORS
800IU
OR 60 MINS
SUN EXPOSURE
PER WEEK

VITAMIN C
VITAMIN B6
VITAMIN E
ARE BEST FOR
IMMUNE
SUPPORT

RDI FOR
VITAMIN C
60MG
OR APPROX ONE
ORANGE

How Does our Immune System Work?

Your immune system is a complex network in your body that protects you from pathogens, such as bacteria and viruses, which cause disease.

It is comprised of the lymphatic system, white blood cells and your skin. Within the immune response there are both an innate defense system and an adaptive defence system which work together to protect you from pathogens.

The main difference between these two systems is one you are born with (innate) and one you strengthen as you are exposed to different pathogens over the course of your life.

Your first line of defence against pathogens is your skin and mucous membranes, like your eyes, nose and mouth.

It is important to keep your skin healthy through a routine of cleansing and moisturizing in order to maintain this barrier of defence. It is also important to have cuts and scrapes cleansed right away to help support your immune response.

In addition to your skin, your body has chemical defences which include the acid in your stomach and enzymes in your tears.

If the first line of defence is breached, a secondary innate immune response will be activated.

Your white blood cells begin to patrol your blood and lymphatic system for pathogens and infected cells in order to destroy them.

Your body helps the white blood cells find the source of the infection by triggering the inflammatory response which includes redness, swelling, heat and pain. When you see these symptoms after injuring yourself, you know your immune system is working!

Sometimes pathogens can still overwhelm the white blood cells so a message is sent to the hypothalamus in your brain to crank up the heat, triggering a fever.

Increased temperature increases the metabolism of your cells so they can keep up the defence. Although a fever is often considered a symptom of infection, it is actually your immune response joining the other innate defences.

Many pathogens are invasive enough that the adaptive defence system is activated. This part of your immune response is much more specific to the type of pathogen it is fighting. As you grow from infancy, you are exposed to many different pathogens that trigger your adaptive immune system to remember and develop immunity for the next time you are exposed. However, this is a slow process that only occurs with exposure and does not defend against pathogens that can be fatal on first exposure.

Vaccinations have been developed to train our adaptive immune response by effectively exposing us to life-threatening pathogens, in a safe and controlled way, so our immune system remembers how to defend our bodies when we are exposed to the same pathogen in the outside world.

Therefore, vaccines are arguably one of the greatest inventions in human history and have prevented an unmeasurable amount of human deaths.

Some pathogens remain the same over time and some change quickly. This is why you only require one or two doses of measles vaccine while you require an annual influenza vaccine to reap the same protection.

How can you help support your immune system?

Get vaccinated!

Ask your healthcare team for advice.

Take care of your skin.

Wash your hands often.

Eat a well-balanced, healthy diet and maintain adequate hydration.

Get enough sleep and rest.

Get moderate exercise regularly.

Reduce stress to a manageable level.

Have a good hearty laugh!

Jocelyn Alves
Director of Health and Wellness

Profile: Talking Safety with Melanie Burton

Melanie Burton has served as Director of Resident Services at Christie Gardens for two years now. Although to some that may seem like a relative newcomer by Christie standards, her experience and enthusiasm have been a welcome addition to the Christie Leadership team.

Melanie brings over 25 years of operations experience from not-for-profit and corporate environments. Recently, Melanie presented an Emergency Procedure Information Session to residents. We asked Melanie to highlight some of the key points about the department she oversees and her recent safety presentation:

WQ: What does the Resident Services team do?

Melanie: Resident Services is the department which includes maintenance, concierge, security, reception, housekeeping, laundry, store, café services, in addition to other resident issues concerning comfort and security. We also facilitate the orientation of new residents at Christie Gardens to ensure they are not only feeling welcomed, but also that they are trained one-on-one with our fire and safety procedures.

Safety and security are main priorities at Christie Gardens. We are grateful that our residents recognize it too.

When I presented the Emergency Procedure Information Session last month in the auditorium, it was to a packed house.

WQ: Why did you give the presentation?

Melanie: We hold the presentation on an annual basis as an extra reminder to residents to think about safety procedures. It's also a chance for us to highlight what we do for our staff training and the safety equipment in the suites and throughout the building. At that presentation, a "tips for residents" list was reviewed. We've had many requests to repeat that list, so here's a chance to share it again:

Emergency Tips for Residents

- Create your own small emergency kit if you had to be away from home for a day or two – include daily essentials and important phone numbers;
- Remember when you leave your suite to close the door behind you and lock it if possible;
- If you cannot easily leave or need assistance, don't worry – stay in your suite and wait until the fire department arrives;
- Plan your escape route ahead of time.

WQ: Wouldn't it be dangerous to stay inside a unit if the building was on fire or another extreme emergency happened?

Melanie: Especially if mobility is an issue, staying in your unit is the right thing to do. Our emergency kit stations, maintained by staff on a monthly basis, include the name and location of residents that have limited mobility and may require assistance. In case of emergency, these lists would be immediately handed over to the Fire Department who are expertly trained to get people to safety.

WQ: What else does the staff at Christie Gardens do to prepare for emergency situations?

Melanie: It's a long list! The equipment maintained by Resident Services is extensive – from the back-up generator system, to communication devices, to fire alarm panel and sprinkler operations.

Emergency training is handled by Resident Services and HR Departments. All staff at Christie Gardens are involved on a regular basis. Our residents know from enduring the monthly loud fire drills that go off! It can be loud, but hopefully residents understand this is our regular opportunity to get together and practice in case of an actual emergency. Staff know their roles and act promptly to make sure residents are safe.

I am thankful we have such a great, caring team of people who know how to respond properly. But practice never stops!

I also serve as Chair of our Crisis Prevention Team, which meets every other month. The purpose of this committee is to review all emergency procedures, coordinate and train all staff, organize all emergency drills, and to discuss concerns and suggestions brought forward from residents, staff, and volunteer resident fire wardens.

Our staff training is extensive and planned out a year in advance with fire training being the most common. Other emergency training includes power outages, chemical spills, train derailments, to name a few.

WQ: Where do you plan to take emergency preparedness next?

Melanie: Right now we are mapping out 2018 and into 2019. What requirements we need to meet and where we can exceed. That's where our residents and staff become our best assets.

We are lucky to have dedicated, long-term people involved to know the lay of the land and also to look for new opportunities for improvement.



Melanie Burton
Director of
Resident Services