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TOP 10 TIPS ON HOW TO PREVENT THE FLU THIS SEASON AND BUILD YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM!

If you can keep your body in tip-top shape, your immune system can help support your body's ability to help, and get over the flu quicker with fewer complications.

- Avoid sugar in large amounts. Sugar actually depletes your white blood count, which your body needs to fight infection.
- Gargle and clean your ears with 3% Hydrogen Peroxide solution.

This is incredibly effective at killing bacteria and viruses. By gargling with 3% hydrogen peroxide solution and putting a few drops in your ears at the first signs of a cold or flu, you can decrease your odds of catching the flu.

- Have chicken soup when you're sick. Researchers found that chicken soup prepared with lots of veggies decreases the inflammation responsible for cold symptoms, such as a runny nose or congestion.
- Eating a wide variety of fresh, wholesome foods packed with powerful vitamins and minerals is the first step to ensuring a strong immune system. Vitamins A, B6, C and E and the minerals zinc, iron, copper and selenium are critical for maintaining strength and immunity. During cold and flu season, increase your dosage of vitamin C for added virus fighting benefits.
- Add Garlic. Garlic is known for its antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal properties and can prevent infections from taking hold and spreading. A daily serving of two raw garlic cloves will provide you with the bulbous herb's healthy benefits.
- A mushroom a day. Mushrooms have been found to increase production and activity of white blood cells, improving your chances of fighting off infection. Shiitake and maitake mushrooms provide the biggest immunity boost.
- Jump-start your immune system each morning with a fresh pot of black tea. While the healthy properties in black tea have been known for centuries, a recent Harvard University study confirmed its healing effects. The study found that people who drank five cups of black tea a day for two weeks had 10 times higher levels of the cold- and virus-fighting chemical interferon than those who did not drink tea. Researchers suspect that green tea has the same effect.
- Exercising 30 to 60 minutes daily can give your immune system the extra kick that it needs. Research shows that people who walked regularly for 12 weeks had half the number of colds and sore throats as people who were less active.
- Sleep on it. Getting a good night's sleep is essential for the immune system to recharge itself. An overly fatigued body doesn't have the necessary strength to fight off infections.
- Lather Up. A strong immune system should be able to combat the Flu virus, but washing your hands frequently can increase your health odds even more. Use warm water and soap and avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes to prevent the virus from entering your system.



Healthy and Delicious: Thanksgiving Sweet Potato Pie

Instructions

Preheat oven to 400° F. Place potatoes in a large saucepan and pour enough water over them to cover. Set saucepan over high heat and bring to a boil. Cook 8-10 minutes or until potatoes are fork-tender. Drain and transfer to a food processor. Purée just until smooth (or press through a fine mesh strainer). Measure 1 1/3 cups of the purée and set aside.

In a large bowl, combine egg substitute and sugar. Whisk in next 6 ingredients. Press pie crust into bottom and up sides of a 9-inch pie pan. Pinch around rim to make a decorative edge. Pour mixture into prepared pie pan and bake 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350° F and bake 30 more minutes, until center is set but still slightly quivery. Cool on a wire rack, slice into 8 pieces and top with nonfat whipped topping.

Ingredients

2 lb Sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks
1 c fat-free liquid egg substitute
3/4 cup sugar
1 c evaporated skim milk
1 T butter, melted
1 1/2 t vanilla extract
3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon salt

*(1 slice or 1/8 of pie and 1/4 cup
whipped topping): 303 calories
25% fat (8 g; 4 g saturated)
66% carbs (50 g)
9% protein (7 g)
1 g fiber
118 mg calcium
1 mg iron
283 mg sodium*