

Immune Boosting Snacks

The immune system involves many processes that require certain nutrients to function. To obtain optimal immune support, eat a variety of nutrient rich foods every day!

Vitamin A (beta carotene) can be found in carrots, spinach, and sweet potatoes and it helps reduce inflammation and strengthen immune cells as well as the skin, which is the first line barrier to infection.

Vitamins C and E are antioxidants that help to reduce free radical damage. Having antioxidant support like foods rich in vitamins C and E helps rid the body of free radicals. Good sources of vitamin C include citrus fruits, berries, and many other fruits and vegetables. Vitamin E can be found in nuts and seeds.

Vitamin D plays a role in regulating the immune system. It is produced when the skin is exposed to sunlight, but it can also be found in a few foods like wild caught salmon and mushrooms that have been exposed to UV light.

Zinc is important for the development of immune cells, and some food sources include meat, nuts, beans, and whole grains.



Vegetables and Hummus

- 1 medium carrot
- ¼ red bell pepper
- ¼ cup snap peas
- ¼ cup hummus

1. Slice carrot into rounds.
2. Slice bell pepper.
3. Add vegetables on a plate with hummus.



Cottage Cheese and Strawberries

- ¼ cup cottage cheese
- 4 strawberries

1. Slice strawberries and serve on top of cottage cheese.

These snacks are good sources of the essential nutrients that boost the immune system.

Some of these recipes produce one serving while others yield multiple servings that can be used as quick snacks throughout the week.



Yogurt Parfait with Pumpkin Seeds and Blueberries

½ cup plain Greek yogurt
¼ cup blueberries
2 Tbsp. pumpkin seeds

1. Layer yogurt with blueberries and pumpkin seeds.



Herb Roasted Nuts

1 cup mixed nuts (walnuts, cashews, almonds, peanuts)
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 Tbsp. each dried rosemary and thyme

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Toss nuts with oil and seasonings.
3. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes.

Note: this recipe makes 4 servings and is meant to have leftovers. (One serving: Use ¼ cup of nuts, 1 teaspoon oil, and a pinch of each seasoning.) You can also add a variety of spices to boost flavor and health benefits. Turmeric is a great anti-inflammatory spice.



Immune Boosting Oat Balls

1 cup gluten-free oats
½ cup peanut butter
¼ cup pure maple syrup or honey
½ cup walnuts
½ cup raisins

1. Mix all ingredients in a large mixing bowl until well coated.
2. Form into 1-inch balls and refrigerate for at least 15 minutes.
3. Store leftovers in an airtight container or bag for up to 7 days.

Original recipe from dietetic intern Katie White.

This recipe makes 10 immune boosting oat balls. Each ball is one serving.



Apple Slices with Nut Butter

1 medium apple, any variety
1 Tbsp. nut butter (almond, peanut, cashew depending on preference)

1. Slice apple and spread nut butter evenly over each slice.



Mandarin Orange with Toasted Almonds

1 mandarin orange
7 almonds

1. Add almonds to a small frying pan over medium high heat.
2. Toast until fragrant, continuously moving almonds in pan with a spatula.
3. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Serve with mandarin orange slices.



Radish Slices with Avocado Mash

4 red radishes
½ avocado
½ Tbsp. dried cilantro
1 tsp. lime juice
Salt and pepper to taste

1. Slice radishes into thin disks.
2. Mash avocado with a fork and mix with cilantro, lime juice, and salt and pepper.
3. Use radish slices like chips and enjoy with the avocado mash.



Raspberry Chia Seed Pudding

1 cup milk of choice (dairy milk or any fortified plant milk works well)
¼ cup chia seeds
1 Tbsp. cocoa powder
½ cup raspberries

1. Mix milk with chia seeds and cocoa powder. Set in refrigerator for 30 minutes.
2. Stir well as chia seeds begin to thicken, place back into refrigerator for at least three hours.
3. Enjoy ¼ cup of chia seed pudding with a handful of raspberries on top.

Note: this recipe makes four servings that can be stored in the refrigerator for future use. (One serving: use a 1 to 4 ratio of chia seeds to milk and 1 tsp cocoa powder.)



Smoked Salmon Roll Ups

1 oz wild caught smoked salmon
1 Tbsp. cream cheese
1 Tbsp. raisins

1. Spread cream cheese onto smoked salmon slices and top with raisins. Roll up the ingredients in the salmon, using a toothpick if needed to keep the rolls together.

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Written for GIG by Katie White, Bastyr University Dietetic Intern (2020-2021)
This article has been assessed and approved by a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist