

NATURAL IMMUNITY AND PRE-EXISTING HEALTH CONCERNS

We have an immune system - this means we can protect ourselves from COVID-19 (a scientific fact which has not been highlighted in Government advice)

Our immune systems have evolved highly effective mechanisms which can protect us from all viruses so far encountered. If this were not the case, the human race would be extinct by now!

But what if I have an underlying condition which makes me more likely to get severe COVID-19? You are quite right. There are certain underlying conditions which don't help, for example, being overweight/obese or having type 2 diabetes, heart disease or lung disease. But you can still boost your immune system and some of the recommendations here could also improve your underlying condition, so it's a win-win situation!

Is this all backed up by science? Yes, there is a considerable volume of science showing how dietary/lifestyle choices, as well as certain food supplements, can support the immune system and protect us from respiratory viruses in general, and COVID-19 in particular. Please see our other nutritional leaflets for links to the science.

LIFESTYLE CHOICES

What should I be eating? It's more about what you should not be eating: sugar, refined carbohydrates (such as white bread or pasta), biscuits, cake, snacks, processed foods. Instead, focus on unprocessed foods (hint: if it has ingredients on the label, it's not an unprocessed food). Eat plenty of protein (meat, fish, eggs), vegetables and fruit.

What should I be drinking? Plenty of water. Not too much alcohol. Tea and coffee in moderation (without sugar).

Should I be exercising? Yes, but not excessively or you can trigger inflammation. Go for a good run a couple of times a week and brisk walks on a daily basis. Aim to give your lungs a good workout and raise your heart rate.

Should I give up smoking? Since COVID-19 is a respiratory disease, you need to keep your lungs as healthy as possible. So yes, absolutely, give up smoking.

What else could I be doing? Ensure that your home and workplace (where possible) is well ventilated. Keep windows open if the weather permits; at least open the windows briefly once a day to ensure that fresh air circulates.

What food supplements should I consider taking and how much? The most essential food supplements to mitigate respiratory viral infections are vitamin C, vitamin D and zinc at the dosages shown below.

- **Vitamin C:** Minimum 2g/day. Best taken in smaller doses every few hours. Increase with symptoms.
- **Vitamin D:** Minimum 4000 IU/day, increase with symptoms.
- **Zinc:** Minimum 30mg/day, increase with symptoms.

When should I start taking supplements? Because you can start to get symptoms around the 10th day after infection and sometimes as late as the 14th day, this means that for 2 weeks you could be allowing the virus entry into your body before you are even aware of it. By this time, the virus has become well entrenched. It's not impossible to eradicate it but it is quicker and easier if it does not gain a foothold in the first place. So, supplementation is best started when well, and used preventatively.

You must not rely on the information on our website as an alternative to medical advice from your doctor or other professional healthcare provider and if you have any specific questions about any medical matter, you should consult your doctor or other professional healthcare provider.