

Nutrients and foods that boost your immune system



With cold and flu season already upon us, it is a good time to evaluate what things you can be doing to help your body fight off all the “bugs” out there.

Of course, a healthy lifestyle is your first line of defense. Not smoking, maintaining a healthy weight with regular exercise, eating plenty of fruits and vegetables, getting a flu shot and getting regular sleep are just a few things that can keep your immune system running well. Diet and nutrition can also play an important role in boosting the immune system.

Adding a variety of fruits and vegetables to your diet will provide the vitamins and minerals needed for reducing sick days and increasing energy levels. Zinc, selenium, iron, copper and vitamins A, C, E and B6 are vital components to immune system function. Below are good food sources for each of these nutrients:

—Zinc: oysters, crab, shrimp, beef, pork, yogurt and turkey.

—Selenium: button mushrooms, cod, shrimp, tuna, halibut, chicken and pork.

—Iron: tofu, dried beans, peas, spinach, romaine lettuce, oysters, clams and beef.

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Holyoke Enterprise November 14, 2013