

Eat for Immunity

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

What you eat plays a role in your immune health, which is your body's ability to fight infection. While there's no single food that can magically improve immune health, studies show that a nutritious dietary pattern over the long term can support a strong immune system. So, what should you eat?

Get enough protein: Fill a quarter of your plate with protein-rich foods, such as poultry, fish, lean meat, tofu, dairy, eggs, beans and lentils. Protein helps build antibodies, which are proteins produced by the immune system in response to foreign substances. Plus, many of these foods contain zinc, which helps regulate immune system functioning.

Choose vegetables and fruits: Fill half your plate with a variety of colourful vegetables and fruits, which are rich in antioxidant vitamins (A, C and E), and phytonutrients, such as beta-carotene. Diets that lack vegetables are associated with increased inflammation and oxidative stress, which can negatively impact the immune system. Opt for plenty of leafy greens, berries, and orange-coloured options, such as carrots, squash and cantaloupe.

Enjoy whole grains: Add brown rice, quinoa, oats or whole-grain wheat to a quarter of your plate. These grains contain dietary fibre, which gets fermented by the gut into short-chain fatty acids that produce protective, anti-inflammatory effects.

Get enough vitamin D: This vital nutrient plays an important role in regulating the immune system. It's found in eggs, fatty fish, fortified dairy products, and dietary supplements.

Finally, cut back on foods that promote inflammation and immune system disturbances, such as fast food, baked goods, candy, salty snacks and soft drinks. These foods lack fibre, vitamins and minerals.



“Sometimes things aren't clear right away. That's where you need to be patient and persevere and see where things lead.” — Mary Pierce

CSI notes

Accessing Your Manulife Account

Your Manulife account can be accessed online to submit claims, review your claims history, review your coverage, look at your Drug Plan, print a member ID card, search the drug database, access a health library, or send a note to Manulife if you need help.

Go to www.manulife.ca/signin.

- Select **Register Now** to get started, or log in as usual if you've already set up your account.
- Refer to your Manulife card for your Plan Contract number and Member Certificate number.
- Download the Manulife Mobile app for access on the go. Submit claims, use your benefits card, find healthcare providers, and more.

To submit claims online:

- Sign in to your account, select **Submit a Claim**, fill in the details, review for accuracy, and submit.
- Include your direct deposit information the first time you submit a claim online or with Manulife.

Mobile:

To set up Direct Deposit, sign in, hover over the **My Profile** tab and select “Edit my banking information”.

Need help?

Contact Manulife at 800.268.6195.

Exercise: Rx for Childhood Obesity

Significantly overweight children are at elevated risk for chronic health problems, including asthma, sleep apnea, elevated blood pressure and joint problems. Youngsters with obesity often suffer from self-esteem problems and from bullying.

If your child has challenges with excess weight, you can help him or her achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle so they reach the right weight for their own body type.

Remember, kids come in all shapes and sizes, and should not be put on strict weight loss diets while they are still growing. A child's weight is a concern when it rapidly changes, but not when they are growing steadily and predictably. Your health care provider can help you know the difference.

Practice positive lifestyle habits with your children, including healthy eating, sufficient sleep, positive self-talk and ample physical activity. Remember, children thrive on routine. Offer nutritious foods with a consistent daily pattern (say, breakfast, lunch, dinner and a snack) rather than allowing constant grazing.

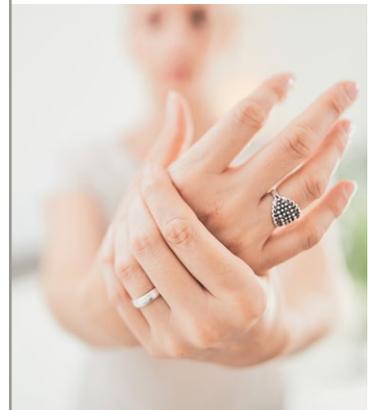
Children and teenagers should be physically active at least 60 minutes daily, according to Health Canada. It's a challenge to limit your child's screen time, but it's crucial for weight control.

Encourage participation in school or community sports activities and share information with other parents about physical activity opportunities in your neighbourhood's parks and community centres. And remember, children imitate adults, so add physical activity to your life. Encourage your kids to join you in activities you all enjoy.



September is Arthritis Awareness Month, a good time to

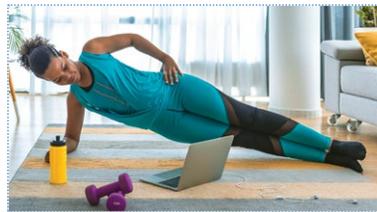
remember this condition, which is characterized by inflammation in the joints or other parts of the body. Six million, or more than one in five Canadians, with joint problems must contend with the daily challenges of arthritis, for which there is no cure. The most common form — osteoarthritis — often strikes by age 40. Learn more at arthritis.ca.



Headache Relief

Besides pain medications, take these steps for relief:

- Get enough sleep, avoid skipping meals and try to pace yourself.
- If you're seated for long periods, stand up and stretch frequently.
- Apply a cold compress to relieve pain in the back of the neck or temples.
- Accumulate at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity activity, such as brisk walking.
- Avoid medication overuse. Taking headache medications, including over-the-counter options, more than twice a week can increase the severity and frequency of your headaches.
- Try relaxation techniques, breathing meditation and other forms of tension relief to ease stress. Routinely strengthening and stretching the neck and shoulder muscles can significantly help.



Seek prompt medical care if your headache is sudden and severe or follows a head injury; is accompanied by fever, stiff neck, confusion, seizure, double vision, weakness, numbness or difficulty speaking; or gets worse despite rest and pain medication.



Tension headache is a common condition often triggered by our everyday physical activities and mental stressors.

Tension headache pain is typically mild or moderate in the head, scalp or neck, causing muscle tightness in these areas. It can become intense and last for hours.

Common tension headache triggers:

- Ongoing physical or emotional stress.
- Too much alcohol or caffeine.
- Jaw clenching or teeth grinding.
- Eyestrain.
- Fatigue.
- Snoring or impaired sleep.
- Colds, flu or sinus infection.



The Terry Fox Virtual Run is September 19 and is the 41st anniversary of Terry's Marathon of Hope.

Terry Fox was a young man and cancer patient who ran for 143 days across Canada in 1980 to raise funds for cancer research. The Run is a fall tradition in Canada, and more than 650 communities participate in fundraising. People of all ages and abilities are welcome to take part in this non-competitive event led by volunteers. Learn more at terryfox.org/run/.

Organic Food Safety

The organic method of growing food appeals to many people, but you need to take the same precautions when buying organic foods and preparing organic produce as you do with conventionally grown foods.

Check if the organic products you purchase have the regulated Canada Organic or USDA Organic logo. Also, some provinces and territories regulate labelling of organic foods that don't have either logo, but are grown and sold within the province or territory. **Note:** **Natural** doesn't mean organic. The federal government doesn't regulate the term **natural**.

Discard outer leaves of leafy vegetables before eating to reduce contaminants.

Wash all produce with warm water before you eat it. While it's true that organic crops aren't grown with synthetic pesticides, they are cultivated with natural pesticides. They also use natural fertilizers, which could contain dangerous bacteria. Scrub items hard or peel them (e.g., squash or potatoes).

Tip: Always wash produce before peeling.

When you shop for organic food, buy in season or frozen options to get the freshest produce available.

Tip: Organic vegetables and fruits are more expensive than conventional foods, so keep your budget in mind. Also, the term **organic** refers to a growing method. It doesn't indicate nutritional quality. Eat any vegetables and fruits — fresh, canned or frozen — that you can access and afford, whether grown conventionally or organically.



Food Close to Home

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

Supporting local farmers has gained momentum in the past ten years. Here's what you need to know about buying locally grown food.

Local food doesn't always have a predetermined distance, but it's generally accepted that it's produced within your province or territory. From fresh produce to locally raised meat, choosing local has several benefits. It helps create jobs and economic growth in your community, helps the environment by decreasing the carbon footprint, and builds relationships between food growers and consumers.

Local food often tastes great because it's likely fresher than food that comes from more than 1.6 kilometres away. Plus, in-season food is usually available in surplus volumes, which means it may come at a good price.

Of course, that market may not have everything you need to stock your fridge. In Canada, you're not going to find locally grown bananas or coffee beans — so remember, not everything you buy needs to be local. A major limitation of buying local is that not all communities have the habitat or farmland to grow or raise the ingredients they want.



Ask about locally grown food in your grocery store, and check your area for farmers markets. Check your local growing guide to see what's harvested in each season — it will differ based on where you live. For example, blueberry season starts in June in BC, but it's July and August in Ontario. Some foods are grown locally year-round, making them easier to access in all seasons. Tomatoes, peppers, mushrooms and cucumber can grow in indoor greenhouses, while herbs, lettuce and microgreens thrive in indoor vertical farms.

The bottom line? It's great to support locally grown food when you can. Learn more at localfarmmarkets.org/CNfarmmarkets.php.

Farro Salad with Chive-Citrus Vinaigrette

EASY recipe

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 cup farro (substitute wheat berries, pot barley or quinoa) | 3 tbsp orange juice |
| 1 carrot, diced | 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil |
| 1 stalk celery, diced | 1 tbsp rice wine vinegar |
| 1 red pepper, seeded and diced | ¼ tsp salt |
| 1 cup cooked green peas | ¼ cup freshly chopped chives |
| 4 cups baby spinach or kale | ¼ cup salted sunflower seeds |
| | 2 tbsp dried cranberries |



Cook farro according to package directions. **Remove** from heat, rinse to cool and add to a large serving bowl. **Add** carrot, celery, pepper, peas and spinach to the bowl. **Toss** well. **In** a small bowl, whisk together orange juice, oil, vinegar, salt and chives. **Pour** dressing over salad. **Sprinkle** with sunflower seeds and cranberries. **Toss** and serve.

Makes 6 servings. Per serving: 244 calories | 8g protein | 10g total fat | 1g saturated fat | 6g mono fat | 3g poly fat | 33g carbohydrate | 6g sugar | 8g fibre | 185mg sodium



Stay in Touch

Keep those questions
and suggestions coming!

Phone: 800-871-9525

Fax: 205-437-3084

Email: PBeditor@ebix.com

Website: www.personalbest.com

Executive Editor: Susan Coleman • Advisers: Marica Borovich-Law, MBA; John Brennan, MD; Chad Burke, CRSP, CHSO; Cara Rosenbloom, RD • Editor: Aimie Miller
• Designer: Heather Burke

The content herein is in no way intended to serve as a substitute for professional advice. Sources available on request. © 2021 Ebix Inc. All rights reserved. Unauthorized reproduction in any form of any part of this publication is a violation of federal copyright law and is strictly prohibited.

Personal Best® 1 Ebix Way, Johns Creek, GA 30097 • 800-871-9525
• fax 205-437-3084.



We honor God by taking care of our physical and emotional health. CSI encourages each participant to choose a healthy lifestyle and to be equipped to make informed medical decisions. This newsletter is being provided as a service to our participants and their schools.

Canada Insurance Plan
2969 Prairie St SW Suite 102
Grandville, MI 49418

877-274-8796, ext. 230
www.CSionline.org

EXPERT advice — Elizabeth Smoots, MD

Q: Prostate health advice?

September is
Prostate Cancer
Awareness Month.



A: An estimated one in nine Canadian men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, according to the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS). Prostate cancer is the common cancer in men. The main risk is age greater than 65; other risks are family history of prostate cancer and African descent. The survival rate is near 100% when prostate cancer is caught early.

While there is disagreement among health experts regarding the value of screening, the CCS recommends that men with average risk consider PSA testing from age 50. Men at high risk for prostate cancer should consider testing from age 45.

The best ways to prevent prostate cancer are to eat plenty of vegetables and fruit, lose excess weight and, with your health care provider's okay, get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking, every week.

Look Both Ways (and Up From Your Phone)

Did you know? Pedestrians accounted for 17.3% of all traffic fatalities in 2018, according to Transport Canada. Distraction could be a major factor in this rise, so put away the phone and headphones until you get to your destination. Other tips to stay safe while walking:

- Walk on the sidewalk or walk facing traffic if there is no sidewalk.
- Obey all traffic signs and signals.
- Cross at crosswalks. If there aren't crosswalks, make sure your and drivers' views aren't blocked, and never cross by the crest of a hill.
- Look left, right and left again before crossing. Make eye contact with oncoming cars — drivers can be distracted, too.
- Walk during the day; if you must walk at night, wear reflective clothing and carry a flashlight.
- Watch for cars entering or backing out of driveways and parking spaces.
- Supervise children, especially those younger than age ten, while walking near or crossing a street.

Bottom line: Look both ways and put away your phone while walking.



TIP of the MONTH Cooking Grains

Some whole grains, such as pot barley and farro, can take up to an hour to cook. Save time by making double batches and freezing leftover cooked grains. When ready to use, simply microwave or steam with some water until hot. You can also buy quick-cooking grains that take less than 20 minutes to prepare. Try oats, quinoa, bulgur, buckwheat, teff, millet and parboiled brown rice.