

Idaho Naturopathic Medicine

3113 Rose Hill St. Boise, Idaho 83705

122 ½ S. Oregon Street Ontario, Oregon 97914

Ph: 208-275-0007 Fax: 208-514-4563 www.idnatmed.com

Improving the chances of a healthy holiday season.

Have you ever wondered why the cold and flu season occurs in winter?

Viruses don't have a season they emerge, but we do have a season in which we spend more time inside and in closer proximity to each other. In other words, viral transmission is easier.

The winter months also correspond to the holidays associated with high sugar consumption. From Halloween to New Years, sugar is everywhere. Sugar diminishes our ability to fight colds. It literally reduces the response of immune cells responsible for fighting viruses and bacteria.

As we eat more sugar, the immune system weakens, making us more susceptible to increased viral concentrations.

Here is a list of 5 simple tricks to reduce your chances of getting sick over the holiday season.

1. Wash your hands often.
2. Consider using a HEPA air filter to reduce air-borne viruses.
3. Vitamin D3 supplementation. If you don't know your Vitamin D blood levels, 1000-5000 IU of Vitamin D3 daily is safe for most people. For some people, Vitamin D can cause anxiety, so be cautious with this vitamin. Additionally, high levels of Vitamin D may cause liver toxicity and calcium imbalances. A simple blood test can determine your current levels and guide dose levels.
4. Vitamin C supplementation. Vitamin C is known to improve immune function. 1000-5,000 mg daily is suitable for most people. Increased dosages during an active cold may be helpful.
5. Consider taking daily herbs that boost the immune system: Echinacea, Goldenseal, and Elderberry. (Note, avoid Echinacea if you have a ragweed allergy).
6. Avoid or greatly reduce simple sugars consumption and choose a diet with whole grains and vegetables.
 - a. **Avoid** simple sugars such as table sugar, sugary drinks, molasses, honey, agave, molasses, etc.
 - b. **Choose** moderate amounts of complex carbohydrates such as whole grains, vegetable starches and leafy greens.