



What you eat and your immune system

Immunity – our immune system is suddenly brought to the forefront of our attention we all need it more than ever but how it performs when you need it is down to how you feed it.

Everyone is unique, your immune system is no different – why do some people get ill and others not? There are many factors you can influence in terms of your own immune response and even the age of your immune system as this can age at a faster or slower rate than your biological age depending on how you live your life!

The lifestyle factors that impact on your immunological age are;

- Smoking
- Obesity – sorry to say it but being obese suppresses the immune system
- Being sedentary is also damaging to the immune system,
- What you eat –
- A particular area in terms of immunity is the health of your gut flora, We know that probiotics can enhance the immune system and that poor gut health is one of the causes of premature ageing, so to support your immune age please take care of your microbiome, this really will support you right now and in the future.
 - Include probiotics such as live yogurt
 - Eat naturally colourful foods (plenty fruit and veg people are delivering)
 - Avoid an excess of sugar and processed foods – this may feel like a time when you deserve some ‘comfort’ food but consider cake, chocolate, pies, sweets, pastries etc are nutrient devoid, detrimental to your gut flora, inflammatory and likely to lead to adipose tissue being deposited around your body and organs.

When it comes to food, there is a lot of nutritional support to fuel your body and support your physical and mental health but, there is also a lot that can do a lot of harm and hinder your bodies immune response and ability to cope with heightened stress and anxiety. Examples below but list not exhaustive!

Foods that harm

- Sugar/high sugar foods
 - Mood altering (not in a good way!)
 - Suppresses the immune system
 - Affects quality of your sleep
 - Detrimental to the health of your gut microbiome
 - Detrimental to your brain function
 - Biggest factor in weight gain

Whilst it may feel like it, now is not the time to ‘comfort eat’ by allowing yourself to eat sugar filled foods you are depleting your immune system at a time when you need it most.

Foods that heal

- Fruit and vegetables – may seem common sense but right now you need these more than ever! Naturally containing antioxidants and phytochemicals that support your overall health and wellbeing.
- Probiotics – live bacteria to support the health of your gut flora – this collection in your gut supports many aspects of your health including mood, sleep and immune system.
- Ginger – try making a drink containing grated ginger, a tsp turmeric and half orange juice half boiled (slightly cooled) water for an immune boosting drink

There is a lot more to nutrition than this but as an introduction and some easy steps you can take – try just eating real food and avoiding processed foods as much as possible. Stay hydrated, preferably with plain water and eat foods that support both your immunity (antioxidants) and gut health (pre and probiotics).

Take a look at the recipe section which is updated regularly on my website.