



## Twelve Autumn tips to build a strong immune system

1. The mucous membranes that line the throat, nose and mouth are the first line of defence against pathogenic bacteria, germs and viruses. Drink plenty of water and herb teas to help keep the membranes lubricated and the immune system supported. Thyme, sage and lemon balm are easy to grow and to turn into a herbal tea.
2. Gather rosehips to dry for infusions. Rosehips are a rich source of Vitamin C an important anti-oxidant.
3. The spleen stores the white blood cells that destroy bacteria. Keep the spleen in good working order by eating plenty of garlic and lots of seasonal green vegetables like kale, watercress, Swiss chard & cabbage.
4. Harvest and enjoy seasonal blackberries they contain anthocyanidins, powerful anti-oxidants that support your immune system.
5. Include lacto-fermented foods in your diet for a healthy gut microbiome which in turn will support the immune system
6. Pesticides interfere with the functioning of the immune system – where possible choose organic to avoid harmful chemicals.
7. Vitamin D is critical for immune function. In the Northern hemisphere sunlight can only generate vitamin D in the skin during the summer months. Oily fish & eggs from pastured chickens contain vitamin D, however if you eat 100% plant based, whilst mushrooms are a good source, its worth taking a D3 (the active form) supplement.
8. The ideal immune boosting diet is no different from the ideal diet we should be eating every day. Therefore well balanced protein, good fats like hemp, olive oil, walnuts, linseed, whole grains, together with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables rich in vitamins and minerals is the way to eat for maximum immunity.
9. Lymph nodes act as filters in the lymphatic system, which eliminate waste. They house white blood cells that fight infection. Blockages in the system mean it can become less effective at clearing out toxins and waste, leaving you feeling sluggish and susceptible to infections. To keep it clear try skin brushing. Alternating hot and cold water in the shower helps wake up your lymph system and gets the blood flowing.
10. Try to have a good night's sleep as this supports the immune system and minimise stress which compromises the immune system
11. Have fun. Laughter is one of the best ways to boost your immune system.
12. Engage in gentle exercise, daily, if possible, to support the immune system.