

Special feature:

How to boost your immune system

My daughter woke up this morning with a little cough and sneezing. Rather than running to the medicine cabinet for some over-the-counter cough medications which, by the way, have little to no effect on the symptoms, I quickly made her an immune-boosting juice. I didn't want my daughter to miss the opportunity to fight off the virus with food.

Here are the five immune-boosting ingredients that I added to the juice:

1. Beets: This root vegetable is a must in any immune-boosting drink as it's also a potent liver detoxifier. Beets add a sweet flavour because of their natural sugar content, as well as a source of calcium, iron, magnesium, potassium, folic acid and immune-enhancing zinc.

2. and 3. Apples and Oranges: It's no secret that both of these fruits are rich in vitamin C. Vitamin C is one of the premier antioxidants on the planet, maintaining the health of cells and boosting the production of infection-fighting white blood cells and antibodies. Don't forget to use the white stuff that surrounds the orange or the peel, as it is high in phytochemicals that fight cancer, and has anti-viral properties.

4. Garlic: it's strong odour from sulphur is called allicin and it is anti-fungal, anti-microbial, antioxidant, antihypertensive and anti-cancer, all of which translate to immunity-

boosting. They help open the sinuses and keep vampires at bay.

5. Ginger: In Ayurvedic (Indian) medicine, ginger is known as the 'universal remedy'. A whole blog could be devoted to this root vegetable. Not only does it add a little kick to your juice, but it is incredible for your immune system. Ginger contains substances that suppress coughing and reduce pain and fever. It's even a mild sedative, which can help you rest when you are sick with a cold.

Immune Boosting Juice

Ingredients:

- 2 medium-sized beets
- 1 medium-sized apple
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- ½ tbsp of freshly shaved ginger
- 1 navel orange

Place all the ingredients in the juicer. The final product will be a really rich red colour thanks to the beets, but it is really good. My daughter loved it.

Happy immune building!

Contributed by Linda Houle-Robert — a francophone Registered Holistic Nutritionist in Orleans and a marathon runner. She can be reached at lhoulrobert@yahoo.ca