



Stay calm and keep  
your immunity strong

## Description

# There are many options in terms of natural products to help boost your immune system

By **Craig Cormack**, BA, RMT

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Mounting numbers of people are contracting the **COVID-19 virus** throughout the world. You are understandably scared. In the first step, stop and breathe; in the second step, please realize that there are many actions you can take to help you and your loved ones weather this storm and lessen the possibility of falling ill.

This article will first discuss **basic prevention** and then review natural products designed to **reinforce your immunity**. Many of these have been effectively used for thousands of years to strengthen the immune system and restore health if illness occurs.

Elderly people and others with compromised immunity (such as cancer patients) should consider supplementing their diet with the natural products mentioned in this article.

## Essential recommendations

Wash your hands often and carefully between your fingers with soap and water, up to your elbows. Use an alcohol-based sanitizer for your hands if you don't have access to water. Always do this before eating. Refrain from touching your mouth and eyes. Avoid shaking hands with others and stay a good distance – at least a meter – away from other people. If you feel you have to sneeze, do it into a tissue Kleenex that you will dispose of immediately, or inside your armpit. Do the same if you cough.



Elderly people and others with compromised immunity (such as cancer patients) should consider supplementing their diet with the natural products mentioned in this article.

If you have a compromised immune system be extra careful. Limit your trips to public spaces. Wear a mask if you have to go to the hospital. If you feel sick and suspect you might be infected contact authorities by calling **877 644-4545** and find out where you can be tested and treated. Also, practice self-quarantine for 14 days to prevent it from spreading to other people.

## Reinforcing your immunity

If you have a strong immune system, there is less of a chance you will get sick in the first place. This is why outbreaks tend to prey on elderly people with weaker immune systems or children with developing immune systems.

Everybody can improve their immunity by taking some basic steps:

1. Make sure you get enough sleep. The average adult only gets 6 to 7 hours of sleep per night leading to a sleep deficit and eventually, weaker immunity.
2. Limit your intake of alcohol. Studies have shown that increased intake of alcohol may lead to weakened immunity.
3. Make sure you have a good diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables.
4. Drink plenty of water and stay hydrated.
5. Make sure that the air in your home is not too dry or hot.
6. Practice relaxation and meditation techniques.

While researching this article I was pleasantly surprised to find that there are many natural products you can take to reinforce your immunity.

## Garlic and Echinacea

In a prescient article written back in 2000, **Dr. Tariq Abdhullah** (M.D.) described a pandemic situation and its effects. He said, “The real danger lies in the sudden emergence of a markedly varied genetic strain caused by sudden antigenic shifts in the viral reservoirs of avian-swine carriers. If such a dreaded happening should come to pass it would take months to develop a vaccine and as long to administer it...”<sup>1</sup>

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Dr. Abdhullah stressed the need for the government to adopt a preventive attitude by encouraging the public to use a prophylactic approach, combining **echinacea** and **garlic** to boost immunity. Dr. Abdhulla suggested that the government should stockpile these products in anticipation of future pandemics.

In vitro and in vivo studies have shown the tremendous antimicrobial and, especially, the antiviral activity of the compound in both herbs. Research on echinacea has also shown that it seems to be effective against H1N1, H5N1 and H7H7 viruses. It also has anti-inflammatory properties. <sup>2</sup>

A company called *Nasalyze* has developed a product specifically for travellers called *Nasalyze Travel*. “A study conducted on 52 volunteers concluded that the use of garlic extract powder helped participants to protect themselves against infections, with the control group developing 57 cases of infection compared to 20 for the experimental group (and the experimental group recovered more quickly).” <sup>3</sup>

An article on the benefits of echinacea, written by **James B. Hudson**, compared Echinacea to the antiviral drug *Tamiflu*. Hudson said: “Some echinacea extracts have some antiviral capability. *Echinacea Purpurea* and its parts and roots contain active antiviral agents against influenza virus, herpes simplex virus and coronavirus.” <sup>4</sup>

Hudson also noted that when echinacea was used against flu viruses, no resistant strains developed against it, and furthermore, echinacea was effective against viruses that had developed resistance against anti-viral medications. Hudson said, “Therefore continuous usage of *Echinacea Purpurea* in the population would be less likely to generate resistant strains of virus than Tamiflu or other anti-influenza compounds on the market.” <sup>5</sup>

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## Goldenseal and Berberine

**Goldenseal** (*Hydrastis Canadensis*) is an indigenous North American plant. It is commonly combined with Echinacea because they work so well together against colds and flues. Native North American Indians used Goldenseal to treat skin diseases and infections, ulcers, snakebites and many other conditions. Goldenseal seems to be a tonic for the mucous membranes and is also effective against diarrheal and digestive disorders.

Goldenseal contains Berberine, an alkaloid that is very effective against a range of organisms. It also contains another alkaloid called Hydrastine, which has anti-microbial qualities. Goldenseal seems to interfere with the bacterial cell-to-cell genes and influences several processes, so it limits the spread of infection. It also acts as a natural antibiotic. **Berberine** has also been shown to inhibit the growth of several viruses including cytomegalovirus, HSV-1 and human H1N1 strains of influenza A viruses. <sup>6</sup>

## Bee Propolis

**Bee Propolis** is a natural resinous substance used by bees to repair their hives. As a healing product, it has many uses. In animal studies, it has been found effective against H1N1. Scientists have found that it has an anti-viral effect and may be effective against Influenza.

Some products offer a combination of Propolis and Echinacea. Propolis reinforces immunity and has an



~~antibacterial and anti-inflammatory effect. Soviet-period doctors administered Propolis to their Tuberculosis patients because it appeared to remedy lung function and stimulate appetite.~~

## Ginger

**Ginger**, a natural anti-inflammatory, provides an excellent hot and soothing drink when combined with lemon and honey. “Ginger has been identified as sharing pharmaceutical properties with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and works superiorly because it has no side effects. »<sup>7</sup>

‘If you are currently taking medications make sure you check with your doctor or pharmacist to see if any of these products are contraindicated. Most of them are not but it is better to be sure.’

## Zinc

According to an article called *Zinc, Infections and Immunosenescence*, **zinc** is very important for elderly people and people with compromised immune systems. “Zinc may be crucial in this respect because of its catalytic component of more than 300 enzymes, as a structural constituent of many proteins, and as a regulatory ion for the stability of proteins and in preventing free radical formation.”<sup>8</sup> The article suggests that elderly people usually have low levels of zinc and, therefore, zinc supplementation for 2 to 3 months is necessary.

## Vitamin D

**Vitamin D** appears to attenuate the influenza virus. In an editorial entitled *Pandemic Preparedness for Swine Flu Influenza in the United States*, the authors discussed the supplementation of Vitamin D because deficiency of it usually precipitates the influenza virus. “Activated vitamin D acts as an immune system modulator, preventing the expression of inflammatory cytokines and increasing the activity of macrophages.”<sup>9</sup> Vitamin D appears to have value as an immune system regulator and reinforcer.

## Conclusion

As you can see, there are many options in terms of natural products to help reinforce your immunity. Until a suitable vaccine is found it is prudent to take care of your immune system and make it as strong as you can. If you are currently taking medications make sure you check with your doctor or pharmacist to see if any of these products are contraindicated. Most of them are not but it is better to be sure. Follow the directions on the bottle of your natural product.

In any crisis, it is good to know that you can act on your behalf (with consultation) because it is empowering. Stay tuned to a follow-up article featuring more products that help reinforce immunity.

Be well and stay strong.

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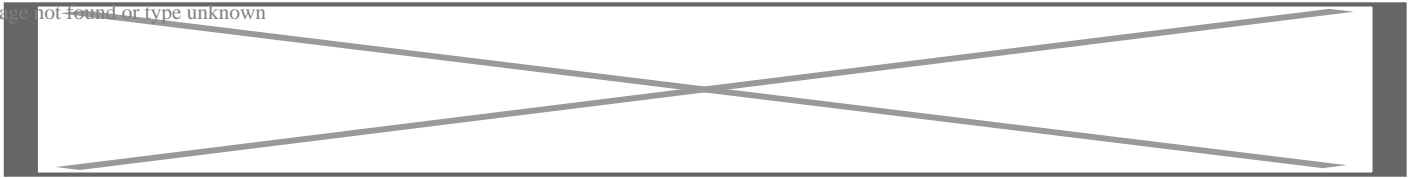
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