

## A Vigor Guide to Help US Navigate Through the Covid-19 Pandemic

### Reduce Your Risk and Ease Through this Pandemic with Mind, Body & Soul Fuel

When it comes to reducing the risk of complications from any ailment, it is important to ensure that your immune system is equipped and ready to fight and recover appropriately. The human body has several innate defenses set in place to protect our inner parts and potentiate healing. It is important to understand that the most optimal defenses are within us and the daily choices we make can either fuel healing or deprive it. There are many processes that make up the immune system. The effectiveness of these processes is dependent on the homeostasis of the mind, body, and soul.

With little solid understanding of the rapidly spreading coronavirus, our very best action is not only to practice handwashing and social distancing, but to also prepare our immune system to become resilient. The goal in building a resilient immunity is with hope to reduce the risk of an exaggerate immune response in contact with the zoonotic virus. In the following guide, I will exemplify how I reduce my vulnerability to illness and maintain tranquility, by focusing on the proper fueling of the mind, body and soul.

### Body Fuel

In order to build immune resiliency and enhance the efficacy of the innate immune response, we must be mindful of (1) what we put into our systems and (2) how well we rest it.

- Sleep is important not only for mental hygiene, but also in restoring energy and protecting the immune system. There is a focus to maintain adequate rest, of at least 7 hours per night, to ensure that natural melatonin is released, and inflammatory kinetics are decreased.
  - ***In order to get adequate sleep:*** (1) reduce body noise (muscle discomfort, neck tension, and acid reflux), (2) nourish the body with plant foods, herbs, and proper hydration (see food fuel below), (3) reduce substance use (illicit drugs, alcohol, and caffeine) and stimulant medication (Sudafed, ephedrine), and (4) perform aerobic activity and mind-body activities (yoga, stretching, breath work, and meditation).
- Food serves as fuel for the physical body and helps to build defenses to fight against bacteria, virus, protozoa, fungi and other pathogens. It is important to maintain intake of the right fuel and reduce intake of the wrong.
  - ***Increase items that fuel the immune system:*** 5-7 daily servings of leafy green and stem/root vegetables (spinach, parsley, kale, sweet and white potato, tomato, garlic, winter squash, and sweet pepper), 2-3 servings of fresh fruit high in Vitamin C (i.e. apples, pears, kiwi, mango, papaya, guava, pineapple, berries, watermelon, and citrus fruit), concentrates (acerola powder, baobab powder, pomegranate juice power, milk thistle powder), supplements (vitamins D, Zinc), herbs (astragalus, ginger, thyme, sage, Oregon grape, echinacea, and chamomile), mushrooms (reishi, cordyceps, and maitake), and immune building essential oils for aromatherapy (eucalyptus, rosemary, cinnamon, tea tree and lemongrass).
  - ***Avoid/Reduce items that weaken the immune system:*** OTC medications (antihistamines, cough and cold medications), steroids, and antibiotics, heavily processed food items (cane sugar, chips, certain type of meats, store dairy, canned foods, cheese, breakfast cereal, and candy bars).
- Focus on these items to lower infection and complication risk:
  - Zinc 15 mg – 30 mg daily
  - Raw Garlic
  - Probiotic with 1 billion colony forming unity that contact Lactobacillus or Bifidobacterium
  - Flavonoids (found in Chinese skullcap herb, licorice herb, onions, apples, tomatoes, nuts, berries, chamomile, parsley and celery).
  - Vitamin C 500 mg – 3000 mg daily
  - Elderberry (**prophylactically**) 10 mL – 60 mL daily (adults) and 5mL – 30mL daily (children)
  - Melatonin 0.3 mg – 20 mg nightly
  - Vitamin A 700-900 mcg daily, Vitamin B6 1.3-1.6mg daily, Vitamin D 600-800 IU daily and Vitamin E (dosing varies)

### Mind and Soul Fuel

When we think of wellness, too often we omit the power of spiritually and the belief in the higher being as a driving force in our health. In a way, soul and mind fuel can be used to strengthen several systems of the human body, including the immune system.

When our mind and soul capacities are imbalanced, emotional distress increases. This may lead to dysfunction and hypofunction of the immune system. Not to mention, increased levels of the stress hormone, cortisol, can further invoke havoc to the immune system. Long term releases of imbalanced cortisol (usually due to chronic stress, steroid use or underlying medical conditions) can increase the risk of excess inflammation and overwork the system, leading to an immune system that cannot protect you.

The chart below list activities that deprive the mind and soul on the left. Replace those activities with ones listed on the right that **fuel** the healthy state of the mind and soul and **encourage** continued immunity of the body.

Activities That Deprive the Mind and Soul	Activities That Fuel the Mind and Soul
Worry	Pray
Stress	Meditate
Anger	Practice Laughter / Sing Positive Songs of Zion
Overfocus On Negative Press and Energy (i.e. Too Much News/Media, Negative Conversations)	Study the Holy Book / Spend Quality Time with Loved Ones and Reflect on Positive Memories
Gossip	Irradiate Healing Energy by Practicing Positivity & Kindness
Anxiety	Practice Deep Breathing / Breath Work <small>Follow The 4-7-8 Approach: Inhale For 4 Counts, Hold For 7 Counts and Exhale For 8 Counts</small>
Overstimulation from Large Gatherings & Loud Noises	Take Solo Reflective Walks in Nature
Intake of Addictive Substances	Do Aerobic Physical Activity <small>Walk, Run, Climb, Bike, Etc.</small>
Use of Toxic Products (Household and Personal)	Enhance the Feng Shui of Your Living Area <small>Buy an indoor plant, use aromatherapy, etc.</small>
Increased Body Noise (i.e Muscle Tension, Pain, Soreness)	Participate in Yoga/Stretching
Negative Self-Talk	Recite Positive Affirmations
Greed	Practice Mindfulness and Gratitude
Sedentariness and Sulking	Engage in Creative Work <small>Artwork, Literature, Music, Paintings, And Software</small>
Unhealthy Nutritional Intakes and Habits (i.e. Junk Food, Gluttony, Etc.)	Indulge in Healthy Eating <small>Fresh Fruit &amp; Veggies, Seeds, Nuts, Superfoods</small>

### What to Avoid If You Test Positive (Or Presumptive Case) for the coronavirus

Because of the uncertainty surrounding this virus, it is best to be cautious when it comes to managing and reducing risk of infection for yourself and others. If you test positive or have COVID related symptoms, consider the following tips.

- Reduce contact with pregnant women, infants and immunocompromised (diabetics, cancer, HIV, malnourished, autoimmune disorders) individuals because their immunity may not be strong enough to fight off the virus if exposed.
- Lessen vigorous exercise because it may slow the rate of healing and increase inflammation.
- Avoid social contact, which can increase exposure and infection transmission throughout the community.
- Fight the urge to smoke tobacco because it can increase the risk of a respiratory tract infection.
- Stress can weaken immunity by increasing cortisol and inflammatory kinetics. Therefore, work on engaging in mind-body activities, mentioned above, in order to reduce stressors.
- In order to enhance sleep quality, avoid staying up late and waking too early. Less than 7 hours of sleep disrupts the balance of important immunoregulatory agents, like cytokines, which are mainly produced during sleep.
- Elderberry, medicinal mushroom extracts, echinacea, and vitamin D may have immunostimulatory properties that can possibly increase inflammatory cytokines (“cytokine storm”) in individuals who are more susceptible to hemophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis. It is not clear who is susceptible to this condition, so **caution is warranted** with the use of these products in the event of a positive coronavirus screening or prominent coronavirus symptoms.

### Tips When Wearing Mask

When wearing a mask, it is very important that it be worn correctly at all times. The outer layer of a procedure/surgical mask is hydrophobic, meaning that it has a fluid-repelling layer. In addition, many masks have a middle layer that filters bacteria and the inside layer (facing the mouth and nose) absorbs moisture.

The outermost layer is blue/green layer which serves as the main barrier to prevent germs from sticking to it. This layer should be **facing out** at all times. If you wear the mask the other way, the moisture from the breath air will stick onto it, making it easier for germs to stay there.

When wearing a mask, keep in mind:

- Procedure mask **do not** prevent the inhalation of small airborne contaminants.
- Procedure masks are single use and only provides minimal protection each day beyond first use.
- Hand hygiene should be performed before and after donning a mask.
- Procedure mask should cover both the nose and the mouth to provide full protection.
- A mask that is soiled, torn, or damaged increases the risk of infection.
- Mask only work when they fit appropriately. Make sure to pinch the nose piece for a snug fit.
- If reusing, mask must be stored in a clean area and not handled frequently.

### **Tips When Wearing Gloves**

Examination gloves are meant to provide an extra barrier of protection for caregivers who are in contact with bodily fluids, feces and toxic medications. When used appropriately, they work to prevent cross contamination between the caregiver and the patient.

When wearing gloves, keep in mind:

- Gloves are single use and are not intended to be worn throughout the day and during normal daily activities. If they are used on more than one occurrence and throughout the day, the integrity decreases and the risk of contamination increases.
- When wearing gloves, you should not handle groceries, phones, wallets, keys and other personal items or touch your face because this will only increase the risk of cross contamination of these items.
- There is minimal effectiveness and protection while wearing gloves on the subway/buses, in stores or in public areas because 8/10 individuals don't follow the Clean Technique appropriately and touch things that they are not supposed to, which leads to contamination of their personal items, children, etc.

### **Closing: Be Safe, Be Smart**

All the information surrounding COVID-19 is rapidly changing every day. When deciding to include integrative, naturopathic or mind-body modalities in your regimen, make these decisions carefully to avoid complications. In addition, keep washing your hands and utilizing sanitizer as directed, those activities will help to lower the risk of contamination and pathogen transmission.

Disclaimer: The information in this guide is not intended to replace recommendations by your personal health care provider. Also, there is not adequate clinical or scientific evidence that these methods will prevent or treat COVID-19 or other respiratory related complications. This information is for educational purposes only and is 100% free to the public. In the event of a complication, follow up with your personal health care provider or nearest urgent care center to be further evaluated for treatment and monitoring and referral to the appropriate level of care.

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