

# *Awakening the Warrior Within*



## *Simple Ways to Build Your Immune System's Power*

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# Introduction

**Our immune system is a battle ground.** This is why I'm calling this book "Awakening the Warrior Within". Even the most peaceful people on earth host internal wars. To be alive is to live with the internal battles waging on inside of us regularly. Even Mahatma Gandhi, the Dalai Lama, Mother Theresa, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, and Jesus have lived with the reality of the internal battle ground.

This internal battle is a beautiful element of nature. This is a gracious gift of the immune system. Just as a country is not considered strong without a well-equipped, well-trained militia, neither are our bodies strong without a well-nourished, sharpened immune system.

Macrophages, phagocytes, leukocytes, and natural killer cells are a few of the good men and women in your inner army. **If you didn't have this inner army, you would never survive.** These cells communicate complex information about invaders, such as harmful viruses. They intelligently gather information and identify behavior patterns of invaders. They collect, copy, and store the data and genetic material of unwanted guests. They train new warrior cells to fight off both known and unknown enemies.

Our immune system is a metaphor for life. Even the kindest, gentlest, most loving beings must fight. The Dalai Lama fights for sovereignty of Tibetans. Jesus fought to end ignorance of God. The Buddha fought to end self-imposed suffering. Martin Luther King fought for racial equality. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar fights to end ignorance and societal violence.

## Ahimsa: Non-Violence

Ahimsa is a sanskrit term used frequently throughout yogic texts. It means "the absence of violence". Isn't this what most of us want?

And yet, violence is a part of nature. We can't seem to escape it. Birds eat bugs. Bigger birds eat smaller birds. Humans eat animals. Vegetarian food systems also kill countless bugs and critters. Is there no escape?

Fighting can bring just as many blessings as it can bring curses. When used properly, fighting can help end deep pain and suffering by causing personal or societal change. But it can also lead to war and hardness. Our immune system is the same way. It is trained to fight the good fight to keep us alive and strong. But when perverted by certain forces - such as poor diet, a draining lifestyle, or unfortunate genetics - it can twist and attack itself, the body.

Our immune system teaches us that we must sometimes fight. As Yoda from Star Wars taught his Jedi Knights, fighting is all about whether you are using it for good or for evil. We need courage and strength in life. These qualities are fundamental to creating a peaceful, abundant, thriving life. In the words of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, "Opposite values are complementary." This is the yin-yang of existence.



### **My story:**

If we met in person today, you would probably notice that I am full of energy, enthusiasm, and passion. My complexion is clean, my body is now lean and toned. My focus is sharp and my mind is clear. I am almost fully pain-free, which is a huge accomplishment. I enjoy my life and feel bright about my future. But it wasn't always this way. In fact, it was quite the opposite.

When I was just 27, I struggled with a wimpy immune system. I was chronically fatigued. Every joint and muscle ached. I suffered from acne for 13 years. Canker sores peppered my mouth and throat, making it hard to chew food or swallow. My digestion was a bipolar disaster - constipation, gas, and chronic cramping. My stomach was in constant pain, and I felt like shark jaws were chewing at my guts. My bloating was so bad that I felt self-conscious wearing a bathing suit. Full-body migraines camped out with me every week or so for a few days. I struggled to function. I caught every flu, cold, and allergic symptom going around. It seemed that all I had to do was just think about a cold, and it showed up in my body.

My wimpy health interfered with my life. I slept seemingly all the time. I could sleep 12 hours per day and still feel exhaustion. I lifted weights but couldn't build muscle. I slept instead of attending parties that I was excited about attending. I even slept through Burning Man one year. (If you've ever been to Burning Man, you'll know that sleeping at all while there can be quite difficult, let alone sleeping nearly the entire time!).

I remember the frustration and anguish because I did everything “right”. I practiced yoga and meditated every day. I ate a vegetarian diet. I drank lots of tea and water. I slept. I didn’t drink alcohol or do any drugs. Why did I feel like an 85 year old who’d been dragged for miles by a freight train?

One day, in total defeat, I crumbled to my knees. I held my sobbing head and lamented that life didn’t seem worth living in such a weak body. I felt ashamed to be chronically sick. How could I teach people about healthy living if I was in such bad shape?

Eventually, an acupuncturist suggested I try removing gluten from my diet. When I did, I noticed a huge improvement in my digestion, skin, and achy joints. I also felt improved energy and less frequent colds. Something else was missing though, because I continued to feel weak and tired.

It wasn’t until I started eating meat again that I noticed a huge uptick in my health. My mind brightened. My stamina increased. I gradually reduced my sugar and grains intake. This brought yet another layer of improvement in my skin, mood, energy and blood sugar levels.

Along the way, I studied and learned numerous ways to jumpstart your immunity. I’ve interviewed several experts who help people understand how we might be damaging our immunity unknowingly, and how we can reverse the trend. What I’m presenting in this ebook is a lot of what I’ve done to bring myself back to health and a strong immunity. Today, I feel healthy, vibrant and energized. I know this stuff works, and it’s all easy to implement.

I will share with you what I’ve learned along the way. I’ll give you action items at the end of each chapter so that you can easily get started on your journey toward super health. I’ll share the articles I’ve written, the experts I’ve interviewed, and some of my favorite immune boosting recipes. Everything I’m presenting is designed to be easy, yet very effective, at helping your health.

## **I will cover the following topics:**

- Healing Foods
- Healing Herbs and Spices
- Medicinal Herbs
- Sleep
- Inflammation and food sensitivities
- Managing Stress
- Beneficial Bacteria (in your gut and your skin)
- Immunity in your mouth, your nose and your hands
- Nutrition Supplements

There is so much more to cover that I won't be able to write about in this general guide. This leaves room for another guide, eventually.

**This e-book was written for general purposes**, and not as a treatment guide for any specific condition. It is in no way comprehensive. The information you'll find in here is scientifically validated material (citations will be included in the final version). This e-book is currently in beta version, which means that the material will continue to be updated/revised. A whole wealth of information begs me to include it in this e-book, and will be added over-time. You learn of updates in the newsletter provided by [www.namastenutritionist.com](http://www.namastenutritionist.com).

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# Chapter 1:

## Warrior Herbs and Spices



# Warrior Herbs & Spices

## Armor up:

**People spend hundreds or thousands of dollars on supplements annually.** Whether they are aware of it or not, they are seeking the very immunity protection, anti-aging, and energy boosting qualities found in vegetables, herbs and spices. I know it's not terribly sexy or earth shattering. But the simple truth is what we've always been told: eat your vegetables. Often overlooked, herbs and spices pack more nutrition per fraction of an ounce than vegetables and fruit could dream of offering. I've narrowed in on the top herbs and spices that you **MUST** keep in your spice cabinet's rotation.

## 19 Ninja Herbs and Spices

Get ready to unleash an arsenal of super-powered ninja nutrients that will stalk, sabotage, and assassinate your free radicals and disease-causing inflammation. This is a good thing.

Free radicals and inflammation are inner demons that quietly, but surely, damage your beautiful body and mind.

These herbs and spices are like undercover agents, holding nature's secret sauce for helping prevent and relieve a great many ailments. These secret agents help reverse the damage caused by toxins, stress, and a suboptimal diet.

Cloves are an excellent example of spices demonstrating huge health benefits. Cloves help your heart, digestion, blood sugar, sexual health, and have deodorizing and anti-cancer effects. [Read more about cloves here.](#)

Herbs and spices contain an arsenal of anti-inflammatory weapons. With these spices on your side, you will not only gain better health. You also will gain access to brilliantly delicious health food. And you will lose any power you once had for whining about how boring healthy food is. All of this combines to create one irresistible YOU.

[Read "19 Ninja Herbs and Spices" here!](#)

Here are a few of my favorite recipes that can help you start using those herbs and spices right away:

◆ [Spices your oatmeal craves \(click here\)](#)

◆ [Herbed Quinoa Salad \(click here\)](#)

◆ [Curried coconut ginger soup \(click here\)](#)



**Action Items:**

- ◆ Check out **19 Ninja Herbs and Spices** to identify beneficial spices;
- ◆ Pick one **sweet** spice (such as cinnamon or cardamom) and apply this week;
- ◆ Pick one **savory** spice (such as curry or paprika) and apply it this week!

# Chapter 2:

## Medicinal Meals



Unfortunately, **too many people wrongly assume that healthy foods are boring foods.** In my opinion, healthy, nature-made foods are some of the **most exciting foods** around. They contain vibrant pigments that span the full rainbow of colors. Fruits and vegetables each come in surprising and unique packages. Starfruit, salmon berries, kumquats, heirloom tomatoes, heirloom carrots, and sweet potatoes feel like an adventure for the eyes and mouth. They entertain our senses with a wide range of colors, shapes and flavors. They generously provide nutrition that supports the health of our entire body and mind.

My favorite section in the grocery store is the produce department. And yet, after years of exploring and working with foods professionally, I am still amazed at the new and unusual produce I find. And with the addition of organic produce, high quality vegetable and fruit are much more easily obtained. Even though organic produce is more costly, think of it as a long-term investment in your health. You can save money now by eating cheaply produced foods, but these come at a long-term cost to your health.

**The bottom line: Eating healthy can be a huge adventure!**



Beets



Daikon Radish



Salad with onion flowers

**Conventionally raised foods are less expensive because they are produced with petrochemicals and grown in depleted soils.** One of its byproducts is harmful chemicals. The pesticides used are designed to kill organisms. If they kill organisms, what evidence is there to indicate that they wouldn't also harm us? The synthetic fertilizers are used to provide three basic ingredients required to grow food: nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. While these basic ingredients may be enough to cover the basic needs for reproducing life in the fields, this doesn't fully nourish the soil. In fact, much of the soil in conventional farms is radically depleted of micronutrients and trace minerals, such as iron, copper, selenium, to name a few. **This means that the food grown in this soil is also depleted of nutrients your body needs.**

## The Bottom Line:

1. We are eating foods depleted from nutrition.
2. We are using up much of our nutrition faster because of coping with chronic stress.
3. Many of us aren't absorbing the nutrition in our foods.



### Action Item:

Try these easy tips (below) for creating zesty, exciting healing meals!

- ◆ [Your salad called to tell you it's lonely](#)
- ◆ [Saucy confessions of a salad](#)
- ◆ [Anti-Cancer Brussels Sprouts \(video\)](#)
- ◆ [Sweet potato blue cheese burrito](#)
- ◆ [3-minute sweet potatoes](#)

# Chapter 3:

## Manage Inflammation



**Acute inflammation** is our body's method of repairing itself. It's meant to only last as short-term response to injury or infection to help us heal.

**Chronic inflammation** is a persistent, modern-world curse that occurs because of toxins from our food and lifestyle. It is wildly damaging to good health and must be controlled or eliminated to preserve our health.

**Find out what foods you are sensitive to and avoid them.** Top foods that we are sensitive to: soy, corn, dairy, gluten. However, many of us are sensitive to things we wouldn't imagine we are sensitive to, such as preservatives, food colorings, garlic, pineapple, caffeine or cayenne. By measuring your specific sensitivity, you can then learn which foods you should take a break from, temporarily (or forever). Allowing a break will give your immune system a chance to "cool down". It's an opportunity detoxify from inflammatory mediators that are circulating in response to eating foods that aren't agreeing with you. Usually, these foods don't agree with you because of repeated over-exposure to them. But when you take a break for several weeks or several months, your immunity can essentially "reboot" itself.

I use the LEAP's mediator-reactor test, which measures a client's reactivity to 150 different foods, preservatives, dyes, and medications. It then reports exactly how sensitive you are to each item. Clients then go through a guided elimination process, eliminating only the reactive items. The tricky part is when the inflammatory food, such as corn or sodium benzoate, is hiding in a medication or supplement. Being the detective, I help sniff out the hidden ingredients (which aren't always listed on the label). Over a period of weeks, we re-introduce foods to identify how reactive they are. Over time, most people can tolerate most of the reactive foods again. Some sensitivities are so severe that a person will never be able to reintroduce without having a terrible reaction. Gluten and soy are two examples.



**Action Item:** Halt chronic inflammation's damage to your body by following this link to learn more in my podcast and blog post about managing inflammation successfully. [Click here](#) to read and listen about squashing inflammation.

[Click here](#) to learn about taking the food sensitivity, LEAP MRT test

[Click here](#) to learn about [Frequently Asked Questions about food sensitivities](#)

# *Chapter 4:*

## *Relax and Unwind*

# Relax and Unwind

To a certain degree, **stress is actually healthy because it forces us to grow and strengthen.** Our bones strengthen by stressing them with tension and weight. Our muscles strengthen by demanding effort from them. Our brains deteriorate more quickly when they aren't challenged. The problem comes when we have mountains of stress, as this tears us down as fiercely as a mountain lion taking down a kitty cat.

## The most common sources of stress:

- Poor sleep
- Non-nourishing food
- Excessive demands at home & work
- Money
- Eating foods that [disagree with our bodies](#);
- Eating foods that promote inflammation, such as processed foods;
- Environmental pollution (such as air and water pollution)
- Negative emotions
- Lack of exercise
- Driving in traffic
- Excessive substances such as alcohol, caffeine, tobacco, funny cigarettes
- Environmental toxins (such as off-gassing of walls & furniture, cleaning chemicals and chemicals in personal care products)
- Constant sensory input, etc. etc

Is it any wonder why so many of us struggle with stress? Well, rather than dwelling on it, let's concentrate on the solutions. I'll provide you with suggestions based on what I've found works well for me. Of course, you'll have to test things out and find what works for you. Even if you have some great strategies, it's always nice to find another effective trick. So please check out these ideas and try something new!

## *Here is my stress-management arsenal:*

- ◆ **Sleep:** 7-9 hours of quality sleep (unless I have crazy deadlines or am traveling)
- ◆ **Meditation:** 20-45 minutes daily
- ◆ **Yoga:** What? Are you surprised?
- ◆ **Regular exercise** I load my iPod with educational material and catch up while walking outside or lifting weights.
- ◆ **Cuddling. Ideas:** I cuddle my hubby, my baby nephew, my friend's pets, my pillows, and sometimes just myself. Who can you start cuddling?

## Relax and Unwind

◆ **Good vibrations.** *Ideas:* Read wisdom or inspiration before bedtime so that it can lighten your mind before sleep. Break out into a dance party to break up your day. Listen to groovadelic music. Hang out with people who make you laugh or feel uplifted. Attend a laughter yoga class.

◆ **Attitude of Gratitude.** Every night, review why your life is awesome. Start small: I'm blessed to have all my fingers and toes, my brain, my limbs, my heart, my lungs, my eyes, my ability to hear, the freedom to live my life as I choose . . . you'll be profoundly uplifted. It's amazing to count up so many miracles. Bonus points: share your gratitude out loud with others.

◆ **Take a break.** *Ideas:* Take a walk when the sunshine is out. Get fresh air. Watch the moon rise or the sun set.

◆ **Change your paradigm.** *Ideas:*

- Learn a new skill.
- Take up an old craft.
- Volunteer at a food bank or soup kitchen.
- Hang out with people who are different than you and learn from them.
- Visit a country farm.
- Find a garden where you can sink your fingers into dirt. Climb a tree. Relax on grass and watch the clouds float past. Jump in a cold river.

◆ **Adopt Tender Loving Care (TLC) into your routine.** *Ideas:*

- Schedule a massage or acupuncture session.
- Give yourself a facial.
- Hire a maid to clean the house.
- Hire a chef to prepare home-cooked meals this week.



### Action Items:

◆ Choose one of the above items to begin incorporating (or just reconnecting with) in your stress-management arsenal.

◆ Tell someone what you intend to do for improving the stress in your life, and ask them to hold you accountable.

# *Chapter 5*

## *Your Hands*

## *Your Hands*

**Ever had the pleasure of a food-born illness?** This topic is a pet peeve of mine. I want to personally scold people when I see them abandon proper hand hygiene after using the public restroom. It's potentially harmful to yourself and others when you fail to wash after using a facility that's crawling with invisible bacteria from countless, nameless butts, bowels, noses, mouths, and private parts. Seriously. Wash that stink off of you, even when you think you didn't touch any stink!

Splashing a little water over your hands isn't hand hygiene. Scrubbing your hands with soap, rinsing, and drying well is what helps remove the nasties from your hands that will soon touch your mouth and potentially make you sick.

Food-born illness is frequently caused by "butt to mouth syndrome". This means that someone's butt bacteria landed on your hands or food, making you ill. Washing your hands immediately after visiting the poop closet is good karma because you are protecting other people from potential nasty.

On behalf of everyone you are protecting by practicing healthy hygiene, thank you for washing your hands!



**Action Item:** Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and warm water before preparing food, before eating, and after using the restroom. Wash with soap for 20 seconds and then dry.

# *Chapter 6*

## *Your Guts*

## Your Guts

While washing your hands is of prime importance, **too much hygiene isn't a good thing either.** Now, this isn't license to stop brushing or flossing your teeth, or to pass on washing your hands before handling foods. But it is important to let yourself get a little dirty from time to time. *Literally!* Dirt offers us helpful micro-organisms (especially dirt rich in organic compost) that help boost our immunity.

**While some bacteria are harmful and pathogenic, many are beneficial - if not vital - to life on earth.** Trillions of bacteria live all over our skin, in our guts, in our noses, in our mouths, in our ears. Some scientists suggest that we are merely a host for these bacteria! While there is much to uncover about bacteria's relationships with human organisms, we do understand that we can't live without many of them.

**In fact, many beneficial bacteria help build our immune system and synthesize vitamins. Here are some of their many super-powers:**

- They increase our immune system;
- They manufacture vitamins (such as vitamin K and B12)
- They manufacture antioxidants;
- They improve our digestion;
- They contribute to our mental and emotional well-being, shaping our behavior in many ways;
- They impact our metabolism;
- They effect our body odor.

*Read my post about how bacteria are bringing sexy back here.*

**Our beneficial bacteria are under attack.** With the rise in antibiotic use in factory farming and in medical practices, our gut bacteria faces constant threat. The rise in sugar consumption also gives our gut bacteria a big fight to stay in balance with internal yeast. Sterile, pasteurized foods present a double-edge sword: while they guarantee the elimination of harmful bacteria, they also guarantee the elimination of beneficial bacteria. The bottom line: fewer and fewer bacteria are available to our digestive tract (stretching from mouth to anus). In fact, because of our hyper-sanitized lives, we have less contact with helpful bacteria that is found in dirt and on uncleaned skin.

# Your Guts

## **Encourage an environment friendly to helpful bacteria:**

**Beneficial bacteria can be encouraged by consuming raw, fermented foods.** Try sauerkraut, kimchee, miso, kombucha, raw pickles. It can also be encouraged by interacting with the natural environment. Try digging your bare hands into a garden bed or organic compost to invite a rich supply of beneficial bacteria to your body at no cost.

You can actually measure your personal micro-organisms that co-habitate with you.

*[Learn about mapping your micro-organisms in my interview with uBiome \(here\)!](#)*

Dirt has been shown to actually increase feelings of well-being. Scientists report that serotonin (a feel-good neurotransmitter) actually increased in subjects who were in contact with dirt!



### **Action Items:**

- ◆ Reduce your refined sugar intake. Sugar is potentially damaging to your gut bacteria, acting as food for yeasts.
- ◆ Eat raw, fermented foods. Try sauerkraut, kimchee, miso, kombucha, raw pickles.
- ◆ Dig into dirt. Play in a garden, build a sand-castle, churn compost, etc.
- ◆ **[Learn about micro-organisms in my interview with uBiome researchers here!](#)**
- ◆ If you eat animal products, eat free-range, antibiotic-free animal products whenever possible.

# *Chapter 7*

## *Your Skin*

## *Your Skin*

**Your SKIN is your body's largest organ.** Whatever products you put onto your skin absorbs into your blood stream quickly. It happens without the benefit of filters that you have in your digestive system. Unlike when you eat a toxin, when you put it onto your skin, you don't get to pass the toxins out through your urine or bowels. Sure, some of the toxins might sweat out through your pores. But when you are generously lathering lotion or soap over your entire body every day, you're building up quite the supply of chemicals. Propylene glycol, DEA, MEA, TEA, parabens, fragrances, and hundreds of other chemicals are casually injected into our personal care products.

The US Government does not require that ingredients used in personal care products are proven to be safe. Savvy manufacturers understand that consumers want more natural ingredients. But even when manufacturers claim that the product is 98% "natural", they may not be disclosing what else lives in the other 2%. What you need to know is this: many ingredients commonly used in our products are linked to hormone disruption, obesity and cancer, among others. Is it worth exposing yourself to such risks when you can avoid it?

Did you ever think about the countless micro-organisms living all over your skin? Most of us have learned that anti-bacterial soaps and lotions are the best defense for protecting our immune system. But have you ever considered that all these anti-bacterial soaps are wiping out your skin's microbial community? Without them, our immunity is weaker.

**When your skin stays intact, your immunity is stronger.** On the contrary, when your skin is broken or inflamed (such as with rashes), your immunity is more vulnerable to infection. When we over-use antibacterial products, we actually reduce our immunity by wiping out micro-organisms that help our skin.

# Your Skin



## Action Items for Healthy Skin:

- ◆ Check out an interview I did with Marilene Richardson of Songcroft Naturals: [Avoid Toxic Skincare](#) (audio and blog post)
- ◆ Read: [Where to find a non-toxic moisturizer without spending an extra dime](#)
- ◆ Find out if your personal care products are safe, FOR FREE, at [www.ewg.org/skindeep/](http://www.ewg.org/skindeep/). This is a VERY EASY resource to use!
- ◆ Eat fish and a variety of fresh nuts to promote healthier skin.
- ◆ Read my post to learn how to [Eat your way to sexier skin \(and protect yourself from sun damage\)](#)
- ◆ Eat lots of colorful vegetables, herbs and spices
- ◆ Keep your skin intact. In the winter, your skin is likely dryer and cracks more easily. Eating omega-fatty acids (such as in fish, nuts and seeds) helps your skin's integrity.

# *Chapter 8:*

# *Your Nose*

## Your Nose

**When your immune system is strong**, it can fight off unhealthy invaders. One way to give your immunity a boost is to rinse these buggers away with a neti pot. I do this at the first signs of cold, flu, or seasonal allergies. I also neti pot occasionally throughout the year to clean pollutants that may be accumulating in my nose from the environment (dust, dirt, pollen, cleaning chemicals, perfumes, air pollution . . .)

A lot of micro-organisms (or microbes) live in your mucus membranes (in your nose and mouth), and are play important roles in your overall health. Microbes that cause flu and colds are passed from the outside world and enter your body quite easily through your nose. These unhealthy germs check in to the “love shack hotel”, where they party and make microbe babies. Eventually, a tipping point is reached, and the microbes gain enough power to give you a cold, flu, bronchitis, or pneumonia.

[Learn how to use a neti pot in my tutorial video \(click here\)](#)



### Action Items for your nose:

- ◆ Use the neti pot under these circumstances:
  - ◆ Whenever you're coming down with cold or flu symptoms;
  - ◆ Whenever you've been around sick people;
  - ◆ During allergy season;
- ◆ Avoid practicing the breathing exercises on a full stomach.

# *Chapter 9*

## *Your Mouth*

## Your Mouth

**Did you know that your mouth is a critical gateway to your total body health?** Unfortunately, most of us in our modern world do not understand just how critical our oral health is to total health. One of the most notable integrative oncologists of the 20th century, Dr Josef Issels MD, claims that **97% of all cancers begin in the mouth.** Your mouth also contains flora that can either promote or erode your total body health. Many modern and old-school dental procedures increase physical toxicity.



### Action Items

- ◆ [Listen to my interview with the Ora Wellness Founder](#) to learn how intimately tied your oral health is to your immunity and total body health.
- ◆ Check out the Ora Wellness website to learn from their free videos, resource, and more.

# *Chapter 10:*

# *SLEEP*

# SLEEP

**Many people weaken their immunity and age before their time because of long-term exhaustion.** Many of us don't even realize how much we are sacrificing by allowing our sleep.

Less than 7 hours sleep for one night increases your cortisol (stress hormones), increases ghrelin (hunger hormone), decreases your mental capacity, and promotes fat storage.

## **The most common causes of poor sleep:**

- Unmanaged stress
- Irregular sleep patterns (night shift workers are vulnerable when they switch between day and night sleeping)
- Excessive caffeine
- Excessive alcohol consumption
- Over-scheduled lifestyle
- Lack of exercise (your body needs to burn off energy!)

I've found clients I work with simply believe that 5-6 hours of sleep per night is enough. These same clients typically rely on caffeine to get through the day AND/or struggle with stubborn fat. Frequently, they often report they feel stressed with some area of their lives.

If you rely on caffeine to get through the day, this is a big sign that you are either NOT sleeping enough, or not obtaining quality sleep.

*Bottom line: Prioritize obtaining regular, quality sleep.*

# SLEEP

*Here are simple steps to improving your sleep:*

- ◆ Stop drinking caffeine at least 8 hours before bedtime. Swap it for water (yes, water boosts your energy and necessary hydration!)
- ◆ Exercise to remove the stress from your body - a few minutes of yoga stretching before bed, or an after-dinner walk, can work wonders.
- ◆ Turn off stimulating sounds, lights, and activities 1-2 hours before bed to help your brain wind-down.
- ◆ Try meditating before sleep.
- ◆ Set a regular bed-time and stick to it.
- ◆ Set a regular wake-up time.
- ◆ 7-9 hours of sleep per night is optimal for most people.
- ◆ Try melatonin or 5-HTP before bed for help with relaxation and sleep. Refer to a practitioner for advice (MD, ND, ARNP, or RD).



## **Action Items:**

- ◆ Identify if you need more sleep or better quality sleep (be honest!).
- ◆ Seek the help of a savvy sleep expert if you aren't sleeping well.

# *Chapter 11:*

# *Medicinal Herbs*

# Medicinal Herbs

**How did humans manage to stay alive for millions of years without the help of modern medicine?**

**Enter medicinal herbs.** Medicinal herbs have supported our ancestor's health and offered relief of physical and mental discomforts for a very long time. It wasn't until recent history that "modernized" cultures lost relationship with medicinal plants. Many medicinal plants grow among us like weeds. In fact, we pay money to buy herbs as supplements, when many of them are growing in our own backyards. Examples include dandelion, milk thistle, nettles, and plantain. Most of us simply wouldn't recognize medicinal plants or know how to use them. Sadly, ancient remedies and old traditions are seldom handed down by older generations. However, herbs and natural treatments still offer as much health-promoting promises as they ever did. Even though modern medicine developed a strong reliance upon pharmaceutical drugs, many herbal masters continue to keep traditional medicines alive with herbal formulas. You do not need to become a master of herbs to obtain wonderful health support from them.

Keeping the cold and flu away can be as simple as adding a few ready-to-go herbal tinctures into your daily routine.



## Action Items:

- ◆ Listen to my interview with Rebecca Potter, Master Herbalist, about [Keeping the Cold and Flu Away With Herbs \(article and audio file\)](#).
- ◆ Add one new medicinal herb to your medicine cabinet this season.

# *Chapter 12:*

# *Nutrition Supplements*

# Nutrition Supplements

**After your needs for nutrition, sleep, exercise, stress management, and hydration are met,** you can enhance your immune function with various supplements. Here are some very general guidelines about supplements.

**Vitamin D:** Vitamin D is increasingly recognized for its role in immunity health. From cancer to multiple sclerosis to type 1 diabetes, vitamin D plays an important role. In fact, our immune system's killer cells are only able to react to, and fight off, serious infections when vitamin D is involved in the reaction.

This fat-soluble vitamin stores in your liver. It is possible to take too much. You should take vitamin D only if it is warranted by lab results indicating that you are low or borderline low. The general recommendations for supplementation are 2000 IU/day. [Here is a handy resource](#) from the National Institutes of Health.

Sunlight is our primary source of vitamin D synthesis. Sadly, the sun has a bit of second-rate status these days, and most of us spend our days inside buildings. It's not easy to eat enough vitamin D in foods to make up for the amount of sunlight we aren't getting. Supplementing is becoming much more common. I recommend you have your vitamin D levels tested to determine if you should supplement.

Foods that contain vitamin D are liver, egg yolks, and fatty fish (such as salmon, mackerel and herring).

**Vitamin C:** Most fruits and vegetables contain vitamin C. In developed countries, vitamin C deficiency is rare. Vitamin C is noteworthy for helping normal immunological function, and is suspected to play a role in delaying the onset of cancer, heart disease, and other diseases caused by oxidative stress. Evidence suggests that people who consume enough vitamin C are less likely to develop cancer. It helps regenerate other antioxidants and is important in protein metabolism. In multiple studies, vitamin C has been shown to be ineffective against the common cold.

# *Chapter 13:*

# *RECIPES*

# RECIPES

**Make your food as delicious as possible.** Many people who tell me they don't like vegetables find that they do like them when they are prepared deliciously. In order to boost your immunity, you really need to veggies. By eating more veggies, your health gains loads of phytochemicals and phytonutrients. An added benefit is that eating more veggies generally means eating less processed food. But many people believe they dislike vegetables, and believe that their kids are too picky to eat them. The key is that the food needs to taste as good as the food it's replacing. Any food, when thoughtfully prepared, can put french fries and cheetos to shame, making it easy and desirable for every mouth.

## **Here are tips to make your foods taste amazing:**

- Add savory spices (such as cumin, coriander, curry, paprika or caraway).
- Add fresh herbs, such as tarragon, thyme, basil, or rosemary.
- Add yummy fats, such as grass-fed butter, olive oil, or coconut butter.
- Cook your veggies with flavorful ingredients, such as garlic, onion, or leek.
- Try unique salt blends, such as himalayan salt.
- Use freshly cracked pepper (skip the stale, pre-ground stuff if possible).
- Accent with lemon or lime juice, and grate a little of the rind over your meal.

Another wonderful way to consume veggies is to drink your salad. No, I do NOT mean drink a V8. By blending up fresh vegetables, you are able to consume a LOT more vegetables than if you tried to eat them all in a salad. I like to add all kinds of veggies to my morning smoothies: kale, avocado, lettuce, chard, beet, to name a few. It's also a great vehicle for anti-inflammatory herbs (I add parsley and cilantro), spices (I also add ginger and turmeric roots). I also love adding a little chia seed or hemp to my smoothies.

It does help to have a heavy-duty blender, like a Vitamix. It is an investment, and it should last you for years and years to come. I've never met anyone who wasn't thrilled with their Vitamix. However, if it just isn't in the budget for you, I recommend just cutting up your vegetables smaller before adding them to your blender.

# RECIPES

## **These are some of my personal favorite smoothie recipes:**

- [Immune Ammo: Orange carrot ginger smoothie](#)
- [Green smoothie superpower](#)
- [Strawberry-cucumber-beet smoothie](#)

## **These are some of my favorite immune-boosting recipes:**

- [Immune-Boosting Tomatillo-Cilantro Dressing](#)
- [Herbed Quinoa Salad](#)
- [Curried Coconut Ginger Soup](#)
- [Anti-Cancer Brussels Sprouts \(video\)](#)
- [Sweet Potato Blue-Cheese Burrito](#)
- [3-Minute Sweet Potatoes with Pistachios](#)

*Conclusion . . .  
(and what's coming next)*

# CONCLUSION:

While it can seem overwhelming, it's only because there are so MANY things that can help us create immunity. Here's a quick review about what we can do to create a strong immune system. Select ONE ITEM to work on this week. When you get comfortable with the rhythm of it, add another item. Take time to get familiar with it. Relax. This is all a fun experiment. Each thing you take on can make a big difference. But don't let your ambition stress you out! Brick by brick, you'll lay the foundation needed to create deep health.



## Action Item Review:

◆ **Prioritize quality sleep.** Stop drinking caffeine at least 8 hours before bedtime. Exercise to remove the stress from your body - a few minutes of yoga stretching before bed, or an after-dinner walk, can work wonders. Turn off stimulating sounds, lights, and activities 1-2 hours before bed to help your brain wind-down. 7-9 hours of sleep per night is optimal for most people.

◆ Choose one thing you can do this week to reduce stress. Here are a few helpful ideas:

- ◆ Eat nourishing food.
- ◆ Take a walk outside.
- ◆ Read uplifting wisdom.
- ◆ Count your blessings.
- ◆ Connect with someone you love.
- ◆ Spend time with nourishing people.

◆ Pick one item you can add to your diet to improve. Can you replace cookies with fruit? Can you drink more water? Can you eat an extra serving or two of veggies?

# *What's coming next?*

There is so much left to share that we couldn't dive into in this introductory book. We still have to talk about exercise, meditation, breast feeding, bone broth and other high-mineral foods, and sex for boosting immunity. My goal with this ebook was to bring it to you as soon as possible, because people need immune help now.

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