

Client: Patrick Holford
Source: Time & Leisure (Putney) (Main)
Date: 01 December 2007
Page: 25
Circulation: 50000
Size: 272cm2
AVE: 0

staying healthy this winter

Leading nutritionist Patrick Holford advises on eating your way to good health

For many people the season of excess can leave them suffering from far more than just a hangover or indigestion. At no other time of year do our bodies face such an onslaught of bugs and infections; cold air contributing to aches and pains; excessive eating and drinking - often of the wrong kinds of foods - and lack of sunlight and exercise. This challenging cocktail is enough to test the strongest of constitutions. Small wonder then that so many of us either fall ill or generally feel under par at this time of year. There are however steps that you can take to increase your body's vitality and resistance to infections during the winter months.

Follow the Rainbow Rule:

Try to eat as many different colours of fruit and vegetables as possible each day especially those that are red, orange and purple such as red peppers, tomatoes, red grapes, squash, sweet potatoes, berries and beetroot. This way you ensure an intake of key immune-boosting phytonutrients (nutrients derived from plants), like bioflavonoids in berries and carotenoids in orange and yellow fruit and vegetables. Easy and enjoyable ways to incorporate extra fruit and veg into your diet include smoothies and juices, stewed fruit with muesli or live yoghurt, snacking on fruit and crudité's and serving a range of vegetables with meals, instead of just the ubiquitous peas and potatoes.

Look after your liver

Match each alcoholic or caffeinated drink with a glass of water. Alcohol and caffeine both place the liver under strain to detoxify them, thereby reducing this vital organ's ability to keep on top of other essential

functions such as regulating your energy and supporting your immune system. By keeping yourself hydrated you will help the liver to deal with eliminating waste and harmful toxins. It is also an easy way of cutting down the amount you

drink. If you find cold water unappealing during the winter months, try warming herbal teas or just add a slice of root ginger and some lemon juice to hot water to keep you hydrated and warm.

Seasonal superfoods

Cinnamon helps blood sugar control - add it to stewed apples for breakfast with muesli, or baked apples for a seasonal pudding.

Ginger: Particularly good for sore throats and stomach upsets. Put six slices of fresh root ginger in a thermos with a stick of cinnamon and fill up with boiling water. Five minutes later you have a delicious, throat-soothing ginger and cinnamon tea. You can add a little lemon and honey for taste.

Carrots: provide a rich source of betacarotene. To make an immune-boosting soup, simmer three carrots with two sweet potatoes or a butternut squash (all diced) and lots of grated fresh ginger root in 1.5 pints of vegetable stock for ten minutes. Add half a tin of coconut milk and seasoning to taste and blend before serving.

Rosemary is naturally antibacterial and is high in antioxidants - add a couple of sprigs to roasted vegetables or meat while cooking.

For more advice on healthy eating visit www.patrickholford.com

