

## HEALTH WISDOM

### Foods to beat flu

Anjali Mukerjee

There is no doubt that healthy eating habits are an inexpensive health insurance policy which boost immunity. While nutrition cannot eliminate the chances of contracting flu, it would certainly be helpful in strengthening our immune system and lessening the duration and severity of flu symptoms.

Instead of turning to antibiotics, it's always better to try natural flu-fighters present in food. Pump up your immune system with these guidelines:

- Vitamin C is well-known for treating and preventing colds by boosting our immunity and aiding white blood cells to destroy the invading viruses and bacteria. Include its rich sources such as oranges, gooseberry, sweet lime, broccoli, pineapple, cabbage, cauliflower, and sweet potato in your diet.

- Ginger contains gingerol that helps fight infections and flu. Have ginger tea, or fresh ginger juice with honey and warm water.

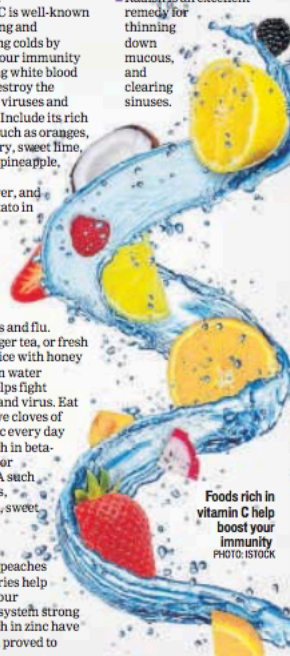
- Garlic helps fight bacteria and virus. Eat four to five cloves of raw garlic every day.

- Foods rich in beta-carotene or vitamin A such as carrots, pumpkin, sweet potato, broccoli, spinach, apricots, peaches and cherries help to keep your immune system strong.
- Foods rich in zinc have also been proved to

improve immunity levels. These are wholegrain cereals like bajra, jowar, wheat bran, wheatgerm, and all shellfish, peanuts, most lentils, skimmed milk, peanuts, pumpkin seeds, watermelon seeds, spinach, etc.

- Any food that is spicy enough to make your eyes watery will have the same effect on your nose, promoting release of mucus and opening up congestion. Consuming spicy foods containing horseradish, hot pepper sauce, ginger, cloves, hot mustard or garam masala helps.

- Radish is an excellent remedy for thinning down mucus, and clearing sinuses.



Foods rich in vitamin C help boost your immunity  
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# VEGAN WAY FORWARD?

Are you contemplating turning vegan? Here are a few things you might want to consider before you commit to a lifestyle of abstaining from any animal-based product

## COCONUT MACAROONS DIPPED IN DARK CHOCOLATE

### Ingredients:

2 cups shredded coconut, 1 cup coconut cream, 60gm sugar, 1tbsp coconut flour, 1tbsp almond meal or almond flour, 1tsp vanilla essence

### Method:

- In a bowl, heat coconut milk and sugar, until warm
- Add coconut flour and almond flour and whisk. Make sure there are no lumps. Heat for a few minutes till it slightly thickens
- Remove from heat and add vanilla essence and the desiccated coconut. Mix well.
- Using a spoon, drop roundels of dough on a baking tray that is greased and lined with parchment. Preheat the oven to 170 degrees Celsius and bake for about 14 to 15 minutes till golden

brown

- Once cool dip the roundels individually in melted chocolate and let the chocolate set

- Stored in an airtight container in the fridge, these will last for about 15 days.

### Health benefits:

"Coconut is a great source of fibre. It also contains vitamin B6, iron and minerals such as magnesium, zinc, copper, manganese and selenium. It has saturated fats from lauric acid which helps raise the heart's protective good cholesterol. So overall not only a vegan but also a healthy recipe," says Manish Khanna, chef and partner, Brownie Point.



Sarojini Jose

Contrary to popular belief, veganism does not just finish at being a vegan through diet. It means discarding everything tangible made of animal products, right from leather and silk to fur. It is a dietary choice, that is definitely an extreme form of vegetarianism.

People are taking to veganism for a number of reasons including weight loss among the other health benefits it has to offer. In fact, the month of January is promoted as Veganuary to encourage people to adopt this lifestyle or at least try it for a month.

Speaking about its rising popularity, Pavan Chennam, executive chef, Conrad Pune, says, "As an increasing number of people adopt plant-based diets around the world, restaurants and chefs are eager to cater

to the growing trend by creating vegan menus. Chefs have started introducing vegan dishes on their menu as well as pop-up events are done with vegan dishes on the menu."

But jumping on the fad diet bandwagon may have its consequences and veganism is not devoid of its share of downsides. According to Mumun Ganerwal, nutritionist and founder, Yuktahaar, veganism as a concept is better suited for non-Indians. She gives a simple example of milk. "Milk from the European breeds contains the A1 variant of beta casein protein, which has been related to allergies and serious health conditions. Milk from indigenous breeds is of superior quality and carries the crucial A2 beta casein protein. Veganism works for Western countries because when they avoid milk, they avoid the inferior A1 milk. For us, it is foolish to give up milk, ghee, curd, etc.," she says.

Recognising one of the biggest criticisms of non-vegetarian diet, she insists that non vegetarians exercise caution and avoid meat from factory farms. "Only thing is you need to ensure that you are having meat or eggs from

animals raised in sustainable and cage-free farms," she says.

Those looking forward to trying out veganism can do so in a safe manner by following these guidelines, suggested by Neha Shetty, nutrition expert and senior manager, Reduce.

- Balance it out: Make sure to gorge on veggies, fruits, grains, lentils, nuts and healthy fats. A well-balanced diet would provide the right nutrients that your body needs. Macronutrients and fibre are essential to keep you full of energy, and plant foods are loaded with it

- Get the protein: Animal-based foods are high in good quality proteins and your supply might go down when you turn vegan. So, proper alternative sources of proteins such as tofu, soy beans, etc. should be consumed in regular intervals throughout the day
- Stay hydrated: A vegan diet is rich in fibre and hence consuming sufficient water is crucial to improve the digestion. So, make sure that you consciously sip on water
- Vitamin B12/D3 and iron:

Animal products are rich in B12 and hence their levels in your body may go down when you abstain from it. When you turn vegan, it is crucial to supplement your body with vitamin B12. And replacing milk with a calcium-rich diet is also essential apart from including iron-rich veggies and fruits, and soaking up some sun

- Include probiotics: Dairy products contain good bacteria that help in our digestion. So it's important to find a vegan friendly probiotic source such as coconut yoghurt or groundnut yoghurt
- Limit your processed food intake: Meat and dairy are more calorie-dense. So after switching to your vegan diet, to satiate your hunger pangs, do not buy those vegan processed or preserved foods
- Right ways: Keep an expert in loop while you follow the diet to be sure it suits your body.

• ht.caf@htlive.com

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