



Surviving the Cold & Flu Season

Worried that you'll get sick? Strengthen your immune system with a little self care: Balanced eating, regular sleep, physical activity, and stress reduction can help keep you on the right track.

Balance Your Plate

- Keep your gut bacteria healthy! Think of those “bugs” as natural barriers to and fighters of infection. Feed them well by including lots of whole grains, veggies, fruit and some fermented foods (think Yogurt, Kim Chee, Kefir, Sauerkraut, Tempeh). <http://ow.ly/GMmq300zMJ0>

- Fruits and vegetables also provide: vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals and antioxidants that work together to keep you healthy and fight disease and infection.

- Don't forget the Omega-3 fatty acids that are found in fish, nuts and flax seed oil which help stimulate immune activity of our white blood cells. These little guys literally eat up germs!

Catch Some Zzzzs

- Getting adequate sleep (7-9 hours per night) improves your immune system and decreases your susceptibility to contagious illness like colds and flu.

Keep Moving

- Did you know that regular, moderate intensity exercise and a well balanced diet makes us less susceptible to upper respiratory infections and colds?

- Exercise is also a great way to relieve stress! 30-60 minutes on 4-6 days of the week is plenty. If you over exercise both in frequency and intensity, you're likely to become fatigued and MORE vulnerable to bacteria and illness.

- If you're getting sick, don't exercise – let your body rest.

Wash Your Hands

- This is *the most important thing* you can do to prevent getting sick. Make sure to wash your hands after using the bathroom or sneezing and before meals.

- Use hand sanitizer if your hands aren't visibly dirty. If you can see the dirt, it's best to wash those germs down the sink with soap and water.

Lessen Your Stress

- When you're stressed out you may find that you sleep less and eat poorly, which can ultimately lead to fatigue and illness. Address your stress when it happens. Find ways to relax that work for you and take time for your self.

Getting sick is never fun, but if you do get sick take time to relax and recover. Make taking care of yourself a priority and you may lessen the severity of your illness or avoid getting sick all together!

And, if you do get sick, take the time to rest and recover otherwise you'll just be sick longer.

Need ideas on how to eat well?
Contact a Student Health Dietitian for a free nutrition counseling session at **919-681-WELL**. Find ideas at our website: <http://studentaffairs.duke.edu/studenthealth/nutrition>



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