

# The GrapeVine

April 2020

## Supporting a Healthy Immune System

Eating a nutritionally balanced diet, staying well hydrated, washing your hands and getting adequate rest are key strategies for promoting a healthy immune system.



- **Consume adequate calories.** When you do not eat enough, your body produces stress hormones that have a direct connection to lowered immune function.
- **Eat all the food groups.** Make sure to eat a well-balanced diet that includes fruits, vegetables, protein, grains and dairy.
- **Micronutrients and antioxidants.** Iron, zinc, vitamin D, vitamin A, E and C, and beta-carotene play important roles in the immune system. By eating a diet that includes all the food groups and eating foods rich in different colors, you will likely get plenty of these micronutrients and antioxidants.
- **Maintain hydration.** Dehydration causes the body to be more susceptible to bacteria and viruses. It can also cause an increase in hormones linked to suppression of the immune system. 
- **Keep your gut healthy.** Consume pre- and probiotic foods. Prebiotic foods include bananas, onions, garlic, asparagus, beans and whole grains. Probiotic foods include yogurt, kefir, and aged cheeses. 
- **Wash your hands.** See the link in the nutrition resource center to learn proper handwashing technique.
- **Rest.** Sleep helps keep mind and body healthy. Most adults need 7-8 hours of quality sleep, children need more. The National Sleep Foundation provides guidelines for all ages at: <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/press-release/national-sleep-foundation-recommends-new-sleep-times>

### Start A Healthy Gossip

Help get the conversation started with children about promoting a healthy immune system by asking the following questions. They will feel empowered with knowledge on how to stay healthy!

- Can you name at least 5 fruits or vegetables that are different colors?
- Do you know how to properly wash your hands? Let's learn how!

## Upcoming Events

We are working on virtual food safety and orientation meetings. Our Agency Relations Team will forward registration information when it is available.





40 Marcus Blvd, Hauppauge, N.Y. 11788 • (631) 873-4775  
15 Grumman Rd W, Ste 1450, Bethpage, NY 11714 • (516) 294-8528

[www.islandharvest.org](http://www.islandharvest.org)

## NUTRITION RESOURCE CENTER



The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

**'How to Keep Your Immune System Healthy'**

Visit the link below to discover foods that provide immune-supporting nutrients. Eating a balanced diet rich in these nutrients has been proven to boost immune function. On the other hand, research does not show that taking supplements of these nutrients improves immune function or prevents illnesses. Strive for a nutritionally balanced diet!

<https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/preventing-illness/how-to-keep-your-immune-system-healthy>



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **'Keeping Hands Clean'**

Handwashing is an important part of protecting yourself and your family from getting sick. Learn when and how to wash your hands at the link below.

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/hygiene/hand/handwashing.html>

## Chicken Vegetable Stir Fry

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups cooked brown rice
- 1 can chicken, drained
- 1 can mixed no salt added or low sodium vegetables (rinsed and drained—this will reduce sodium if you don't have low sodium canned vegetables) or 1 cup mixed fresh vegetables
- 1-2 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon oil



### Directions:

1. In a large pan, heat oil and add drained mixed vegetables (If using fresh vegetables, cook until slightly soft).
2. Add canned chicken. Heat 2 minutes.
3. Add brown rice and soy sauce.
4. Stir until well combined.

### Tips and Facts:

- ✓ Use any and all vegetables in this stir fry. Choose a variety, with varying colors in order to provide plenty of antioxidants and micronutrients.
- ✓ Choosing low sodium products such as low sodium soy sauce will help reduce risk of high blood pressure and heart disease.