

# MINUTE NUTRITION NEWS

October 2015

## EAT RIGHT TO FIGHT THE COLD AND FLU

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The fall season is here and that means cold and flu viruses are lurking just around the corner. In this issue, get the latest facts on what foods and supplements can help strengthen your immune system.



### KEY NUTRIENTS FOR A STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM

**Vitamin C** – A large study done in 2013 showed that vitamin C may help with reducing the duration of the common cold if taken before the onset of cold symptoms. However, Vitamin C has no function in *preventing* the cold.

To get enough vitamin C, eat at least two cups of vitamin C-rich vegetables and fruits each day. This includes bell peppers, broccoli, red cabbage, brussels sprouts, broccoli, kiwi, orange, strawberries and pineapple. If getting enough vitamin C through vegetables and fruit is difficult, taking a 200mg supplement may help. Taking any more than this amount is not recommended, as no further benefits have been shown in research studies.



**Zinc** – Some studies showed that zinc given within 24 hours of onset of cold symptoms was helpful in reducing symptom duration. However, these findings have not been consistent across other studies. The only finding that was consistent were the side effects of bad taste and nausea after taking the high and possibly unsafe dosages of these supplements. One study even found that taking too much zinc can weaken your immune system.



The takeaway? Ditch the zinc supplements and opt for the natural sources. The best source of zinc is oysters. Smaller amounts can be found in other shellfish, red meats, whole grains, baked beans, pumpkin seeds and dairy products.

### OTHER NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS

- **Echinacea** – Contrary to popular belief, Echinacea has not been proven to be useful in preventing or treating colds.
- **Garlic** – Another commonly used supplement, but also not a proven product to help prevent or treat the common cold.
- **North American Ginseng** – When taken before the onset of a cold, North American ginseng extracts may help with shortening the duration of the illness. Taking 100mg up to 400mg daily for at least eight weeks have been shown to be effective. If you currently take any medications, check with your Nurse Practitioner whether it is safe for you to take ginseng.
- **Chicken Soup** – This is an all time favourite! Although chicken soup cannot prevent the cold, it may help with improving symptoms including runny nose, cough, sneezing, sore throat and chills.



**Note:** There is no proven supplement that can help prevent or treat the flu. Getting your flu shot is the best way to prevent the flu. Ask your Nurse Practitioner about getting your flu shot today.

# RECIPE OF THE MONTH

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## Maple and Balsamic Roasted Squash and Beets

Continue to eat seasonal through the fall season! Beets and squash combined with maple syrup and balsamic vinegar give a light yet comforting taste of fall.



Serves 4 (1 serving = approximately 1 cup)

### Ingredients:

|        |                                   |
|--------|-----------------------------------|
| ½      | butternut squash                  |
| 1      | large beet                        |
| 2 tbsp | extra virgin olive oil            |
| 2 tsp  | maple syrup                       |
| 2 tsp  | balsamic vinegar                  |
| 2 tbsp | roasted sunflower seeds, unsalted |
| pinch  | oregano                           |

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Line two baking sheets with aluminum foil and set aside.
3. Peel and chop the squash and beet into small cubes. Divide evenly between both baking sheets.
4. On each baking sheet, drizzle 1 tbsp of olive oil. Mix and toss with your hands until all vegetable pieces are evenly coated.
5. Spread vegetables evenly and roast for 30 minutes.
6. Remove from oven. Add 1 tsp maple syrup, 1 tsp balsamic vinegar, 1 tbsp sunflower seeds and a pinch of oregano on each baking sheet. Toss with your hands until evenly mixed.
7. Place oven on broil setting and cook for another five minutes.
8. Remove from oven and serve!

### Nutrition information (per cup):

190 calories, Fat 9 g (14% DV), Carbohydrate 29 g (10% DV), Fibre 8 g (32%), Protein 3 g, Sodium 40 mg (2% DV), Sugars 9 g, Calcium 100 mg (10% DV), Vitamin C 33 mg (60%), Vitamin A 22,880 IU (460%), Iron 1.9 mg (10%)