



Pathogens and Your Body

What are Pathogens

Pathogens are any chemicals that your immune system recognizes as a negative agent. The immune system then creates a specific antibody to fight against and eliminate that specific pathogen. Pathogens can be bacteria, viruses, molds and even certain foods and food additives.



Your Immune System

Your body's immune system is very strong and works to eliminate pathogens 24 hours a day. Most pathogens are controlled without you ever knowing, but every once in a while, the battle takes a little longer. Runny noses, coughing, sneezing and fever are your body's natural way of fighting the pathogens and returning to health; even though these symptoms make you feel sick.

Helping the Body Fight

Getting enough sleep is the most important thing you can do to improve your immune system. Along with a healthy balanced diet, try adding some spicy foods to help break up mucous, where many of these pathogens live in your body.

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Pathogens and Healthy Eating

In general, the best advice is to eat an organic diet of mostly fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds and legumes, with some grains and limited animal protein.

Fruits and vegetables

They have more disease-fighting potential than any other category of foods and, since they're at the bottom of the food chain, the lowest concentrations of environmental toxins. That doesn't mean they're exempt from pathogens; remember the E. coli and salmonella outbreaks traced to spinach? Thoroughly wash even organic produce before you eat it.

Meat

If you eat meat, it is suggested that you buy high-quality products and that you get flesh foods from local producers whenever possible. Choose lean cuts of grass-fed meat; they're lower in saturated fat and calories than grain-fed, and higher in omega-3 fatty acids and conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), a fatty acid with cancer-protective and anti-obesity effects.

Dairy

Milk, cheese, butter, yogurt and other dairy products most likely to come from cows that have been treated with rBGH (recombinant bovine growth hormone); this means they contain higher levels of IGF-1 (insulin-like growth factor one), which increases the risk of breast cancer, colon cancer and prostate cancer. The label "rBST-free" is an unverified claim; organic dairy comes from animals that are certified to be free of rBST (you'll also avoid antibiotics and pesticides). Grass-fed dairy has the best ratio of omega-3 to omega-6 fats. Goat milk products contain less lactose than cow's milk and an easier-to-digest protein molecule.

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Fun Food Facts!



Ginger has long been touted as a cure for colds and flu. Grating or slicing ginger root and adding it to hot water like a ginger tea is one way to try it. Ginger increases sweat production which flushes out toxins and germs. It also helps with nausea.

Did You Know?



Coughing is not the only thing that keeps kids and caregivers awake at night. Many Canadian children consume caffeine daily, which leads to sleep problems and concerns such as obesity. Research has shown that children between the ages of 8 and 12 drink the equivalent of about 3 cans of caffeinated soda daily. As kids consume more caffeine, sleep disruptions increase.