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Boost Immunity for the Cold and Flu Season

Body

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By Chrystle Fiedler

When it comes to cold and flu season you may reach for vitamin C but you might also want to stock your medicine chest with medicinal mushrooms. For thousands of years medicinal mushrooms have traditionally been used to promote immune system health. In Chinese art, the reishi mushroom, has long been a symbol of good health and long life. In traditional Chinese medicine, adaptogens such as medicinal mushrooms are known as tonics and help the body adapt during times of stress, making it more resilient while strengthening the body's natural defenses.

Your Immune System at Work

When your immune system is healthy it defends the body against diseases and other harmful invaders, including bacteria and the cold and flu virus. The immune system is divided into two major components, natural and adaptive immunity. Natural immunity consists of:

- the protective barrier of skin and mucus membranes,
- sufficient stomach acid to provide an inhospitable environment for ingested bacteria,
- cells and molecules which mediate inflammation,
- scavenging cells like granulocytes and macrophages that remove foreign matter from the blood and tissue

Adaptive immunity targets various "invaders," such as viruses and bacteria. This branch includes the various lymphocytes such as natural killer cells which respond by killing infected cells, and antibodies. The immune system is also tightly tied in with the endocrine system and the adrenal glands that produce the corticoid steroids. These glands are affected when we're under stress and this makes us more susceptible to colds and the flu.

The immune system can also be compromised by a poor diet, which includes unhealthy animal fats, highly refined and processed carbohydrates, sugars and preservatives, toxins in the environment, allergies and lack of sleep. If you are getting more than two or three colds a year, your immune system may need some help.

Medicinal Mushrooms

Medicinal mushrooms contain many beneficial substances such beta glucan and terpenoids that help promote healthy immune function. Beta glucan molecules strengthen immunity by fooling the body into believing it is being invaded, which prompts macrophages (the giant white blood cells that guard the body against disease) to attack. This chain of events gives a boost to the entire immune system. Terpenoids work with the body's immune defenses to respond to bacteria and viruses. They also work to balance the immune system response.

A recent study showed that the extract of the "Turkey Tail" mushroom (*Trametes versicolor*) commonly found in the woods of North America, Asia and Europe may have a beneficial impact on the human immune system by supporting function of immunologically relevant proteins in white blood cells. The preliminary findings were presented during the 21st Annual Meeting of the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians.

Ultimate Immune Formula

RM-10® ULTRA is the ultimate immune health formula, containing a proprietary blend of organically-grown, tonic mushrooms, carefully cultivated and selected to maintain their genetic integrity. It also contains:

- L-theanine, a natural amino acid from green tea to support healthy gamma delta T cell presence in the body, important for proper immune function and host defense†,
- selenium which helps maintain optimal glutathione production, the body's own antioxidant, and an important factor in immune health†
- and lycopene which helps the body fight free radicals and support the healthy function of multiple cells and organs, including the prostate†.

Together these ingredients promote healthy immune system function† through immune cell function support, immune cell metabolism support, methylation support and antioxidant support†. RM 10 ULTRA also contains betaine, folic acid, vitamin B12 and naturally occurring methionine to support optimal DNA methylation, an important factor in regulating normal cell identity and growth†.

Just as important, these select ingredients are produced through the Garden of Life proprietary Poten-Zyme™ fermentation process to make nutrients more available to the body† and are delivered via UltraZorbe™ 100% vegetarian capsules to ensure potency, eliminate the need for fillers and binders, and provide quick nutrient release through faster dissolution into the body.

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