

Swine Flu

There are more than 25 confirmed cases of swine flu in the UK, and many more are under investigation. Read the latest official advice and find out about the simple steps you can take to help protect yourself and your patients. The World Health Organization (WHO) has raised the level of the swine flu alert to Phase Five. This is a 'strong signal that a pandemic is imminent,' it says.

Remember, preventing the spread of germs is the single most effective way to slow the spread of diseases such as swine flu. You should always:

- Ensure everyone washes their hands regularly with soap and water
- Clean surfaces regularly to get rid of germs
- Use tissues to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Place used tissues in a bin as soon as possible
- Having a stock of food and other supplies, including basic cold remedies, available at home. This should be enough to last two weeks, in case you and your family are ill

The following article explores dietary supplements that help build your defenses by enhancing your immune system. Combine these dietary techniques with common sense and you will be prepared for any flu that comes your way.

Instructions

1. Step

Increase your intake of **Vitamin C**. Vitamin C not only boosts your immune system, but in higher dosages has been shown to be an antiviral as well. The recommendation is to dramatically increase your intake at the first sign you may have been exposed to the flu.

2. Step

Add green tea or green tea extract to your diet. Several clinical studies have shown that the polyphenols within green tea have strong antiviral and therefore anti-flu properties. There have been many other health benefits linked to green tea as well, so this supplement should be a must have.

3. Step

Spice your foods with turmeric. Curcumin, the active ingredient in turmeric, has both antiviral and antioxidant properties to help you body ward off any viral infections. In addition, this compound modulates the inflammation response and decreases the likelihood that your immune system will over react with inflammatory defenses.

4. Step

Ensure you are getting enough vitamin E in your diet. There has been at least one clinical study completed that links adequate vitamin E intake with reduced viral activity. Studies have also shown there may be a link between vitamin E and a reduced duration and severity of flu symptoms.

5. Step

Add a whey protein shake or two to your diet. Not only is whey protein a great source of protein and essential amino acids, but it also directly boosts glutathione levels in your bloodstream. Glutathione is a strong antioxidant that directly supports your immune system. Having increased levels of glutathione increases your ability to fight off infections and illness.

This article was originally published by NHS Choices

References:

1. www.nhs.uk/alertsEmergencies
2. <http://www.nursingtimes.net/whats-new-in-nursing/swine-flu/important-information-for-patients-about-swine-flu/5001032.article>