



David Fairlamb

THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Try to consume as many different plant foods as possible and keep your levels of protein up – healthy food equals a healthy immune system.

FITNESS TIP

Consistency in your training and life will promote results. Committing to a training regime and making it part of your life will help boost your immune system.

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THE last 18 months has shown us more than ever that we need to look after our immune system.

How well you look after your immune system will determine how it and you will age.

Recent studies have shown that our immune age is not necessarily the same as our actual age.

Our immunity will decline with age. However, our lifestyles can determine how quickly or slowly this happens.

Obesity, stress and excess alcohol can raise our immune system, whereas adopting healthy changes can help you turn back the clock and help you live longer.

With masks and social distancing about to become a personal choice, it's now more than ever that you need to look at boosting your immune system.

Here are a few examples to help you:

■ Your immune system drops 2-3% every year from the age of 30. However, 125 long distance cyclists entered a study and they were shown to have immune systems equivalent

to that of someone in their 20s. Therefore exercise is of huge benefit.

■ Research showed those that walked 20 minutes a day had 43% fewer sick days due to a common cold.

■ Poor gut health can increase your immune age, therefore try to consume as many different plant foods as possible and keep your levels of protein up. A Mediterranean diet consisting of fruit, vegetables, whole grains oily fish and olive oil has a positive impact on aging cells.

■ Exposure to cold temperatures has an anti-ageing effect, it can shock your system triggering a positive immune response.

■ About one third of us are lacking in Vitamin D – it's not known as the sunshine vitamin for nothing. Make sure you expose as much of your skin as possible to soak in this very important vitamin. A lack of Vitamin D has shown to be linked to respiratory problems.

■ Try to stick to regular sleeping patterns and aim, if possible, for at least seven hours. Our immune system fights infection and inflammation while we are asleep.



► Soak up the rays as much as you can as third of us in the UK are lacking Vitamin D