Ways Adults Can Boost Their Immune System

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As the seasons change, illnesses tend to spread more easily in our communities. Taking steps to strengthen your immune system can help you stay healthy.

Many adults think vaccines are only for children, but vaccines help protect people throughout their lives. Here are some important ways adults can stay healthy and support their immune system.

We all want to be present with others, especially this time of year. Vaccines help reduce the chance of getting sick and missing work, school, or family activities. They also help protect those around you, especially infants, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems.

They work with the body's natural defenses to fight disease and prevent its spread. Most side effects are mild and temporary, while serious side effects are very rare.

It is recommended for adults to receive a flu vaccine every year and stay up to date on tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough) vaccinations (Td/Tdap). Depending on age, health conditions, lifestyle, or other factors, additional vaccines may also be recommended. Talk with a healthcare provider to determine which are right for you.

Healthy Habits That Support the Immune System

You can help your immune system work its best by:

- Eating more fruits and vegetables.
- Getting enough sleep each night.
- Being physically active on a regular basis.
- Drinking plenty of water and limiting sugary drinks.
- Managing stress through activities such as hobbies, meditation, or talking with a friend.
- Avoiding smoking.

Information for this article came from Extension Collaborative on Immunization Teaching & Engagement (EXCITE) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). For more information, contact Tara Solomon-Smith, Family & Community Wellness Agent, at 620-244-3826 or tsolomon@ksu.edu.

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