

Kids Health | Back to School

Keeping Your Kids Happy and Healthy at School and Childcare

Breathing a sigh of relief now that school holidays are over and the kids are back at school again? To ensure your kids are breathing easy as well, protect them from colds and 'flus this school year!

At school and childcare, kids are exposed to a host of bacteria and viruses and are often susceptible to infections. The start of the school year is the perfect time to boost your child's immunity, so that they stay strong and healthy throughout the year and don't fall victim to frequent infections. A sick child can quickly spread their germs around the family, requiring time off school and having a big impact on family life. Developing robust immunity is essential to every aspect of childhood development. In fact, healthy immunity in children sets the stage for good health well into adult life!

A Healthy Digestive System for Strong Immunity

Over 70% of our immune system lives in and around the gastrointestinal tract; therefore having high levels of good bacteria in the digestive system is essential for building a strong immune system in growing children. The beneficial balance of "good bugs" in the gut is easily upset by many factors, including antibiotics, high sugar diets and stress. This can lead to an increased risk of colds and 'flus for your kids. Probiotics are beneficial bacteria that you can give your kids as a supplement to aid in the development and maintenance of healthy digestive and immune function.

Less Sick Days Thanks to Probiotics

Lactobacillus acidophilus NCFM and *Bifidobacterium lactis* Bi-07 are two strains of probiotics that have been scientifically shown to help boost immunity. Taken in combination over six months, these probiotics have been shown to effectively reduce the incidence and duration of upper respiratory tract infections in young children over winter. In a scientific study of 248 children in childcare aged 3 to 5 years, children who consumed *Lactobacillus acidophilus* NCFM and *Bifidobacterium lactis* Bi-07 daily had significantly less infections, shorter duration of cold and 'flu symptoms, and less days absent from childcare. So if your child suffers from multiple colds and 'flus, these probiotics might be just what they need to help them avoid the 'flu this school year!

Herbs and Nutrients for Boosting Immunity

As well as probiotics, these Natural Medicines may also help boost your child's immunity.

- **Andrographis:** This immune stimulating herb has a long history of use for fighting viral and bacterial infections. A clinical study has shown Andrographis to powerfully reduce the intensity of cold symptoms, such as tiredness, sleeplessness, sore throat and nasal secretions.
- **Vitamin C:** Vitamin C increases the activity of infection-fighting white blood cells. It also inhibits viral growth and reduces incidence of the common cold. Vitamin C has been shown to be most effective when given with zinc.
- **Zinc:** Zinc is crucial for normal development of white blood cells, the body's main defence against infection. Zinc deficiency can dramatically reduce your child's ability to fight bacteria and viruses, making them more susceptible to picking up infections.

Talk to your Practitioner today about the best remedies to boost your child's immunity and keep them healthy and happy this school year.

Simple Steps to Strong Immunity

To support their immune system, these diet and lifestyle tips may help too.

- Ensure your child eats plenty of vegetables and fruit every day.
- Ensure your child eats protein-rich foods in each meal or snack.
- Ensure your child drinks plenty of water daily.
- Reduce sugary foods and sweets, as these can suppress optimal immune function.
- Avoid or severely limit processed foods, additives and artificial flavours.
- Ensure your child has adequate sleep and rest.
- Encourage regular exercise.

Talk to us Today!

Your Practitioner can help you keep your kids healthy this year. Healthy kids are happier and behave better, need less time off school and cause less disruption to the smooth running of family life. Help your kids thrive and do their best at school and play in 2010!

