



Every winter we are encouraged, intimidated and sometimes coerced to get the flu shot. However, even at its best, the flu shot does not totally protect an individual or population from the flu. In addition, in certain years, the shot can be as little as 10% effective, which really means 90% ineffective. The latest argument for an ineffective vaccine is that it still can help. Where is this data? Due to drug companies controlling the media (through funding by advertisements), you will not hear about other options for immune support other than washing hands.

Seasons, Incubation and Contagiousness

There is no simple answer to why the influenza virus proliferates in the winter. Theories include: lower vitamin D levels, more indoor activities, and greater viral survival and transmission in cold, dry, winter air. There is less flu in warm climates.

All infections have "incubation periods", a time after exposure when the infection is multiplying furiously, but not yet manifesting illness. This is often the best time, right after exposure, to amp up immune support. Unfortunately, since the infected person doesn't show any signs of infection, there is no warning. The most logical action is to "drive defensively", and continuously utilize immune support during the flu season.

Avoiding public and confined spaces can help, but try not going to work, school, or vacation by train, bus, or plane, and not going to the movies, store or using a public bathroom for months at a time.

Getting "Sick"

"Sickness" features symptoms such as fatigue, fever, aches and pains, congestion, fogginess, and mucus production. The immune system is waging a war. Chemically, the body is making all sorts of molecules, like bullets to kill bad cells. Other molecules are used as messages between cells or switches to turn on processes such as inflammation. The gut's involvement can cause diarrhea, constipation, pain, and nausea and vomiting.

Manufacturing and transporting these molecules takes a lot of resource. Therefore, mounting a defense relies on having adequate resources from the start. While we can't prove (yet) that vitamin c or zinc helps fight specific infections, we have proof that deficiencies of these nutrients impair immune function. Measuring these nutrients is difficult and finding "optimal" values for a population and individual is more difficult. Therefore, supplementing with such agents, as long as there is no harm, can be helpful.

Like a war, there are strategies and counter-strategies. These viruses watched us evolve, and know how to block or steal our defensive molecules. For example, the very young and old and those with severe deficiency can be infected without a fever or white count, making diagnosis difficult.

Diagnosis

Diagnostic tests are mainly utilized to help in clinical decision making. For example, we can't diagnose high cholesterol or blood pressure without technology. The rapid

flu test has a high false negative rate, meaning that a negative result (i.e. "no flu") can be wrong. The CDC does not recommend using a negative flu test to influence decisions. Therefore we have to wait for illness to make a diagnosis. The common cold, a different virus, and other infections can look like the flu, so a making a diagnosis is sometimes difficult.

Treatment

Treatment of the flu and other viruses is "supportive", which means that anti- fever, pain, congestion, cough, histamine, cough and mucus remedies are utilized. Their effectiveness is very limited. For a few viruses, such as influenza and herpes, there are pharmaceuticals that can shorten the course if taken early, or if taken preventatively (which means continuously), can help prevent a serious outbreak.

The Immune System is The Focus

Not everyone gets the flu, and not everyone dies when they get from the flu. Therefore the immune system explains individual differences. The immune system is affected by other viruses, bacteria, yeasts, parasites and other critters that create an ecological system within us. Development of secondary infections with bacteria, yeast or herpes after the flu is common and demonstrates these complex relationships.

The latest scientific research has shown that 1) these critters live together in community within a "biofilm" that renders the immune system up to 1000 times less effective; 2) certain agents can weaken these biofilms and increase effectiveness of anti-microbial agents 1000 times or more; 3) certain rotations and combinations of agents can be more effective and cause less resistance than giving one agent for days or weeks at a time; 4) the gut hosts up to 60% of the immune system and programs much of its function; what we do and do not put in the gut affects immune function.

Utilizing the best of conventional and holistic tools, the immune system can be supported and the chances of serious infection lessened. Working with a knowledgeable practitioner on dosing and individualization can help formulate an optimal strategy.

Support Immune Function*

Hand Washing
Exercise
Good Sleep
Good Water
Good Air
Vitamin C
Zinc
Probiotics
Pre-Biotics
Iodine
Vitamin D
Vitamin A
Herbals
Special Supplements

Depress/Alter Immune Function

Smoking
Sleep deprivation
Poor sleep quality
Nutrient deficiencies
Dehydration
Sugar
Alcohol
Stress/Cortisol
Certain Diseases such as diabetes and asthma
Certain Medications, such as antibiotics, proton-pump inhibitors, steroids
Toxins such as food additives, GMO's, heavy metals, halides, and petroleum derivatives

*IMPORTANT NOTES:

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3. Dr. Cheikin's website has related articles such as "Infectious Organized Crime", "Stealth Infections" and others.

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