

"If the vaccines were proven safe, and if this was deemed a serious pandemic, then sure, there is a place for vaccines," says Lipman. Still, he cautions: "Everyone reacts differently to vaccines, especially when they include adjuvants, and vaccines can be the trigger that causes problems in people who have other risk factors. Why take that chance?"

He continues: "No one can say for certain that bad things will happen again or that you will suffer dire consequences if you get vaccinated. But this time, you have no legal recourse."

Perlmutter adds: "Few are talking about the potential downsides of the H1N1 inoculation. There is precious little research on the vaccine. I'd like to see a larger population and longer time of exposure in terms of testing. I worry about it."

"As a neurologist, I have received special updates, requesting that I make immediate reports to the Centers for Disease control about any complications due to the swine flu vaccination, such as Guillain-Barré syndrome," adds Perlmutter. "While I think it is great that they are instituting this system of extraordinary tracking, just the fact that they are thinking about it is worrisome."

David Perlmutter, MD, is a board-certified neurologist and fellow of the American College of Nutrition. He serves as medical director of the Perlmutter Health Center in Naples, FL, and is recognized internationally as a leader in the field of nutritional influences in neurological disorders. Visit PerlHealth.com.

Frank Lipman, MD, is the founder and director of the Eleven Eleven Wellness Center in New York City, where the emphasis is on preventive health care and patient education. He is the author of SPENT: End Exhaustion and Feel Great Again, and Total Renewal: 7 Key Steps to Resilience, Vitality and Long-Term Health. Visit DrFrankLipman.com.

Cited Publications: "Hospitalized Patients with 2009 H1N1 Influenza in the United States," April-June, 2009, see nejm.org, Oct. 8, 2009 (10.1056/NEJMoa0906695), and "Trends in Recorded Influenza Mortality: United States, 1900-2004," by Peter Doshi, May 2008, Vol. 98, No. 5, pp. 939-945 in American Journal of Public Health.

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How Prepared Is Your Immune System to Fend off the Flu this Season?

by Neil S. Fico, DC

News stories abound lately about the swine flu and how we can avoid contracting it. We've been told repeatedly to protect ourselves by limiting our contact with germs, washing hands frequently and getting the flu shot. But to take just those measures we are severely limiting our body's natural ability to fight off infection all on its own. With all the fear-focused news coverage, people can often feel powerless to do anything about it. The reality is that we and the lifestyle choices we make every day can actually be the deciding difference in getting sick or not getting sick, whether it's the flu, a cold, respiratory infection or any illness for that matter.

We should not underestimate the innate power we have to be well by what we choose to eat and drink, how much sleep and exercise we get and how much time we take for ourselves to de-stress and recharge mentally. It all makes a major difference in the health and power of our immune system

Follow these steps and you will have a much greater chance of fending off the flu this season:

Drink plenty of water.

Spring or filtered water is best to limit toxin exposure.

Sleep 8-10 hours a night.

Sleep has been linked to balanced hormone levels (including the stress hormone cortisol), keeping weight down, clear thinking and reasoning, improved mood, and vibrant, healthy skin.

Reduce sugar intake.

Research shows that your immunity is compromised by as much as 40% as long as 5 hours after consuming 8 tablespoons of sugar. It reduces the ability of the white blood cells to fight off germs.

Eat plenty of raw fruits and vegetables.

They contain lots of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, fiber and enzymes that can protect cells (including those of the

immune system) from toxin damage.

Eat protein.

It's a building block for a healthy body, mind and immune system. Diets low in protein tend to be high in carbs, which convert readily to glucose, spiking blood sugar and stressing the pancreas and the immune system.

Limit alcohol intake.

Like sugar, alcohol reduces the immune system's response, affecting the ability of the germ-fighting power of the white blood cells and producing a nutritional deficiency. One drink (the equivalent of 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1 ounce of hard liquor) does not appear to bother the immune system, but three or more drinks do.

Supplement your diet.

Take whole food vitamin and mineral supplements targeted toward maximizing immune system function. Standard Process Whole Food Supplements, derived from organic foods, contain the most potent vitamins and minerals in their whole food form providing maximum absorption.

Laugh, be happy.

"Laughter is the best medicine" may sound cliché, but science has now found that every cell in the body has a receptor for the substances produced when we are happy. Every cell is therefore influenced by how we feel.

See a holistic healthcare provider.

A chiropractic physician can provide a comprehensive health assessment and tailor a plan to get you well and keep you well. Regular adjustments will work to re-establish balance and to minimize the neurological damage of physical, physiological and psychological stresses we all experience day to day.

And don't forget to take time for yourself each and every day to meditate and enjoy whatever it is that makes you feel alive and well. After all, the mind and body both work together to keep your immune system performing at its best. Move well, eat well and think well.

For more information, contact Strand Spine Institute at 12465 Ocean HwyA in Pawleys Island, at (843) 979-2273 and visit StrandSpineInstitute.com. See ad page 7.