



Drink Up And Stay Healthy

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(NAPSA)—Your family can find effective ways to fight the flu. That's just as well, considering each year, 200,000 Americans are hospitalized and 36,000 die as a result of influenza infections. Nevertheless, a recent survey by the Florida Department of Citrus showed many people wait until they experience symptoms to adopt such healthful lifestyle changes as eating fruits and vegetables and getting a flu shot. In addition, almost half surveyed never get a flu shot.

Maintaining overall health during cold and flu season is very important, says Lisa A. Hark Ph.D. RD, Director of the Nutrition Education Program at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine. She recommends consumers get a flu shot and make smart choices including consuming nutrient-rich foods and beverages such as 100 percent orange juice to support the body's immune system and help in overall disease prevention.

"When flu-like symptoms start settling in, so many people turn to 100 percent orange juice because it's a vitamin C rich beverage," says Dr. Hark, who also hosted the first season of TLC's "Honey, We're Killing the Kids" family health reality show. "An 8-ounce glass of orange juice is loaded with disease-fighting nutrients and antioxidants. As part of a healthy diet, consuming a glass at breakfast, lunch, dinner or as a snack each day can help keep your immune system in top shape to fight sickness and disease year-round."

Here are just a few other nutrients Dr. Hark says 100 percent orange juice provides:

- **Folate.** Folate is needed by the body to produce new cells to help supply the immune system with a healthy stock of disease-fighting cells and replenish red blood cells to help prevent anemia.

For women of childbearing years, adequate folate may also reduce the risk of having a child with certain brain or spine birth defects.

- **Vitamin B6.** Through its involvement in protein metabolism and cellular growth, vitamin B6 is important to the immune system. The immune system relies on vitamin B6 to properly function. Vitamin B6 helps maintain the health of lymphoid organs that make white blood cells, which help fight infections in the body.

- **Flavonoids.** Flavonoids may contribute to the antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities that take place in the body and may help in the fight against cancer, heart disease and other serious health problems.

- **Potassium.** Potassium is important for the body's cardiovascular health. Diets containing foods that are a good source of potassium and that are low in sodium may reduce the risk of high blood pressure and stroke. In addition, potassium also plays an important role in the response of nerves to stimulation and in the contraction of muscles.

- **Magnesium.** Magnesium may help support healthy blood pressure and contribute to bone health. In addition, it helps your body generate energy and is required for the action of more than 300 enzyme systems in the body.

When temperatures drop and Americans tend to stay indoors, cold and flu rates inevitably soar. By following Dr. Hark's recommendations to consume a healthy diet that includes 100 percent orange juice, get a flu shot, rest more and take the time to exercise, you can increase your chances of maintaining a healthy and strong immune system. For more information, visit www.floridajuice.com.