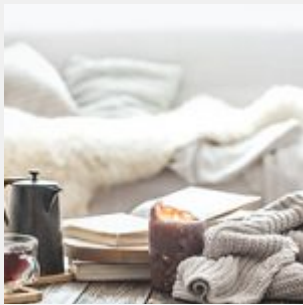


# Leyla Weighs In: Important self-care tips to support immunity



If we've learned anything so far in 2020, it's to pay extra attention to self-care. Here's how:

**Eat right:** Sugar, white flour, and factory-made trans fats wreak havoc on health and immune function. Eliminate them from your diet. Eat more vegetables than fruit. Drink water, mineral water, seltzer and decaf teas and coffees (unsweetened of course), not juice, soda, or energy drinks. If you drink alcohol, keep intake moderate to low.

**Exercise:** The prescription is five or more days per week. Give equal time to strength training as you do cardio. Recent scientific research reveals that we maintain more lean body mass with three strength training sessions per week rather than two. Also, step up your cardio routine with HIIT (high intensity interval training). Not only will you become that amazing fat-burning machine you were meant to be, but you'll be supporting your immune system too!

**Get enough sleep every night:** *I talked about sleep in last week's newsletter but here's more:* The magic number for most of us is between six and eight hours a night. You should wake up feeling rested and refreshed in the morning. Not getting enough shut-eye suppresses the immune system, setting the stage for illness and higher

cortisol levels, the stress hormone that packs on belly fat and diminishes the memory center of the brain. In case you think you're doing the right thing sleeping in on the weekends, there's really no such thing as "catching up" on sleep. Sleeping late on the weekend doesn't compensate for not getting enough sleep during the week.

**Take Vitamin D:** Vitamin D is a superhero of vitamins so make sure you get some. Now that winter is coming, all of us would benefit from taking a daily supplement of at least 2,000 IU vitamin D3 every day in addition to a multi-vitamin and mineral supplement. Trust me, there isn't nearly enough vitamin D in your multi.

**Get happy:** We all experience stress in our lives but key to successful management of it is to change our *reaction* to it. Chronic stress not only wears us down mentally and spiritually, but also wears down immunity and propagates inflammation. This clogs arteries...chokes our hearts, if you will. Commit to creating more positive life experiences and remove yourself from toxic situations and people wherever possible.

Commit to taking good care of yourself to help support your immune system.

To your health!