

THE Lurking germs

Maintaining a Strong Immune System Requires a Comprehensive Attack Against Germs

MAIN TYPES OF GERMS

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Germs are **LURKING** everywhere, from the pets snuggled up with us in bed at night to the bacteria stuck between our own teeth.

Some germs in our body are present all the time and help in the natural rhythm of our body. Certain bacteria in the gut, help aid digestion. When germs outnumber the good cells in our body or when harmful outside germs are ingested then imbalances occur, making someone feel sick.

BACTERIA • VIRUSES • FUNGI • PARASITES

VIRUSES are transferred by small droplets in the air when someone sneezes or coughs.

PARASITES can enter the body by drinking unclean water.

BACTERIA are often ingested from hand-to-hand contact or by consuming unprotected food at a picnic or buffet.

FUNGI already present in the body can get out of balance when a cold or infection stresses the immune system.

THERE ARE IMPORTANT STEPS A PERSON CAN TAKE TO BOOST THEIR IMMUNE SYSTEM AND PROTECT THEMSELVES AGAINST GERMS:

CONSIDER UNLIKELY SOURCES



Look at your environment for possible sources of germs. Household pets are an often overlooked carrier. Make sure pets are regularly checked by a veterinarian and up-to-date on their own immunizations. Be careful that drinking water is safe and healthy. Well water can sometimes carry parasites or an overabundance of bacteria.



FEED YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

Eat a healthy diet that is low in complex carbohydrates and high in foods that have antioxidant properties. Focus on fruits and vegetables and consider following meals outlined in a Mediterranean diet.



SLEEP ON IT

Sleep helps our bodies repair the damage, but only if enough hours are given to it each night. Make sure to give your body at least **8 hours** a night to rest.



OUTRUN (OR WALK) GERMS

Regular physical activity helps increase immune system function. Look for ways to increase physical activity throughout the day whether it is in **small 15-minute intervals** or one, **30-minute workout**.



KEEP YOUR MOUTH IN CHECK

The mouth is an often overlooked source for germs. Practice good dental hygiene including regular dental checkups, and daily brushing and flossing of teeth.

For more information on germs, visit PremierPhysicianNet.com/familyhealth.

SOURCES: Premier Health Emergency and Trauma Services Department