

How to Fight the Flu With Food

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Special to the Ramapo News

If your immune system could talk, what do you think it would say? "I'm tired of constantly battling these invaders," or, "Let's go! We can take on these attackers!"

Our immune systems consist of macrophages, T cells, and B cells. This army protects the body against foreign invaders, including bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi, that disrupt normal cell function. It produces antibodies that protect the body against future attacks by the same invader.

In order to maintain a healthy immune system, you must take care of your body. One way to do this is to supply it with adequate amounts of proper nutrients.



photo courtesy of Flickr

Protein, vitamins E, C and A, selenium, iron and antioxidants are all nutrients that support the immune system, according to "Readers Digest: Foods That Harm Foods That Heal." These nutrients should become a staple part of everyone's diet, especially during cold and flu season.

The building blocks of protein are amino acids, which help make antibodies and other immune supporting components that attack pathogenic invaders and protect against infection. However, Americans typically consume plenty of protein and are rarely deficient.

Vitamin E supports T cell function and aids in antibody production. Good sources are nuts, oils, seeds and avocados.

Vitamin C supports the body's mucous membranes and immune cells. Excellent sources are citrus fruits and juices, melons, kiwis, berries, peppers, broccoli and potatoes.

Vitamin A increases the production of white blood cells and antibody response to an invader. Liver, fish, milk, cheese and eggs are direct sources of vitamin A. Oranges and red, yellow and dark green vegetables are rich in beta-carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A when needed.

Selenium works in the liver to detoxify harmful molecules. Brazil nuts, seafood, whole wheat bread, wheat bran, wheat germ, oats and brown rice are quality sources.

Iron supports the production of B cells and T cells by carrying oxygen to cells throughout the body so it can function efficiently. Red meat, eggs, dried fruits and beans and enriched grains and cereals are good sources.

Antioxidants protect the body and immune cells from the effects of free radicals. Lycopene, beta-carotene and anthocyanins are examples of antioxidants. Tomatoes and tomato paste are good sources of lycopene. Blueberries, blackberries and grapes are good sources of anthocyanins.

Adequate consumption of whole grains, nuts, seeds, fruits and vegetables is the best way to enhance your immune system's response.

Getting enough sleep, reducing stress, practicing good hygiene and adequate exercise is also beneficial. Try to get at least seven-to-eight hours of sleep a night so your body is able to rest and repair itself.

Reduce stress through frequent study breaks, deep breathing and walking around campus to clear your mind.

Good hygiene is an important tool to avoid getting sick. Germs are everywhere, and our bodies provide a perfect environment for them to thrive. Make sure to wash your hands frequently especially before you eat, and use a natural hand sanitizer if you like.

Remember, these foreign troublemakers may be microscopic, but they sure are nasty and can make you very sick, so stay healthy and take care of your body.

Always Greener: '350 Day'

BRYAN KAMINSKY

Staff Writer

Saturday, Oct. 24 was "350 Day." This is significant because it represents the safe threshold that the maximum amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere should be at, 350 parts per million. Across the world different actions were taken to spread awareness about this and the consequences which may come if the carbon dioxide level in the atmosphere is not lowered.

Action was taken on Oct. 23 at Ramapo College of New Jersey outside the Arch. Participants wanted members of the Ramapo community to see the action being taken about the current 387 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

On this day, approximately 15 students laid on the ground with tombstones above their heads with messages about why they were "dead" in relation to there being too much carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Some messages on the signs read, "Died due to melting glaciers eliminating the water supply," "The most powerful hurricane ever recorded destroyed my city," "My crops did not grow due to increase in temperature. My family had no food," "Died due to acid rain, which destroyed our food supply and water" and "I starved to death when my crops died in the drought."

These signified how something which may seem abstract can affect a person if action is not taken to reduce carbon emissions and the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

While the majority of participants laid on the ground as an example, a few other participants went around informing about why people were laying on the ground, and suggested that time should be taken to read a few tombstones.

This is still an issue because the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is still above 350 parts per million. Trying to be more sustainable will help to lower number below 350 where it is safe.

This article is under 350 words to honor this goal.

Green Fact of the Week: There is only one Earth, don't waste it.



photo by Bryan Kaminsky

Student demonstrators staged mock grave sites to raise climate awareness.

Rumor Website Stirs Controversy

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Staff Writer

Imagine a place where the freedom of speech is exercised openly and where college students are encouraged to exercise their minds without having to fear judgment or punishment.

Now imagine a place where students find private truths and demeaning lies about themselves put out by others for all to see, while being able to do little or nothing about it.

In the age of the Internet and technologically savvy, it is not unlikely that



image courtesy of CollegeACB.com

the aforementioned scenarios could be referring to the very same place—one where the right to self-expression is pitted against the entitlement to privacy.

On Feb. 5, the popular college gossip website JuicyCampus.com was shut down as a result of what the site's creator describes as a loss of advertising revenue during the economic crisis; but student gossip found a new home at CollegeACB.com, a similar website picking up the slack of its predecessor.

Following its establishment in August 2007, Juicy Campus became known to college students across the nation, sparking a trend of using the website to post anonymous and unedited remarks about classmates and others on campus.

As the website took off, spreading to more than 500 campuses, some college students and staff members began to question the ethics of what seemed to be a pool of inappropriate, and sometimes defamatory, posts.

On one end of the spectrum there is the belief that the website was an invasion of privacy and that it had the potential to maim reputations that had been carefully built over time.

"I think the premise of these sites is completely unethical," senior Steve Payson said. "Unfortunately, they're also very entertaining. Kind of like the whole car-wreck theory, it's terrible to look at but you can't turn away."

On the other end of the spectrum is the

First Amendment defense—the claim that the right to free speech should not be suppressed.

"According to our laws, it is very much ethical," junior Matthew Young said. "People are just using their freedom of speech. Our opinions are part of what makes us unique from one another."

Since Juicy Campus was closed down, a similar website—CollegeACB.com—has been trying to draw in users and fill the void for gossip-hungry students.

The site's mission statement claims that it "seeks to give students a place to vent, rant, and talk to college peers in an environment free from social constraints and about subjects that might otherwise be taboo."

Amidst all the controversy, students are left wondering if there is anything they can do to protect their reputations.

"Not much," Payson said.

Junior Caitlyn Burns suggested avoiding grudges and unnecessary drama, and being careful about the types of people you tell things to.

"If you try to make good life decisions it will be harder for others to criticize you because, unfortunately, good things rarely ever catch people's attention, especially in the gossip world."