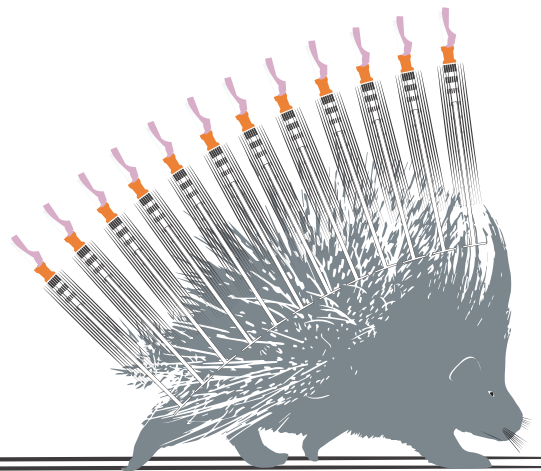


MAAD'OOKIING MSHKIKI SHARING MEDICINE

First Nations, Inuit & Métis Perspectives & Knowledge Sharing on COVID-19 Vaccines

Intersections Between Biomedicine & Traditional
Knowledge & Medicine



TRADITIONAL WELLNESS PRACTICES FOR SUPPORTING IMMUNE FUNCTION

In our teachings, medicine bundles play an important role in health and well-being. #SharingMedicine “immune bundle” includes our ways of knowing, being, seeing and doing in an effort to stay healthy during the pandemic and beyond. We invite you to incorporate what is possible and to practice self-compassion daily.

BREATHING:

COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that can cause lung damage and breathing problems. Breathing fills our lungs with needed oxygen. To engage your diaphragm when you breath, sit with your back as straight as possible with your feet firmly planted on the ground. Place one hand on your belly and one on your heart. Slowly take in a big, deep breath through your nose, allowing your belly to rise as you fill your lungs, and hold it there for a few seconds. Exhale fully.

SINGING:

There are many health benefits to singing from improving your mood to lowering your blood pressure. Singing can not only relieve stress but also stimulate the immune system and build lung capacity. Although it is not currently recommended to sing with others in person (unless you are from the same household, are not symptomatic and are not self-isolating) singing can develop a sense of belonging and connection. If you can speak, you can sing. Carrying a tune is not as important as having fun!

LAUGHTER:

Laughing can boost the immune system. We’ve all heard laughter is the best medicine. While laughter primarily occurs during social interactions with others, there are many ways to increase opportunities for laughing—telling a funny story over Zoom, watching a comedy, reflecting on past funny moments or laughing for no reason without relying on jokes or comedy. What’s more, your brain doesn’t know the difference if you are laughing for real or not. You still receive the same benefits from forced laughter, and oftentimes the fake laughter turns into real laughter.

MOVEMENT:

Even as few as **15 minutes per day of light** physical activity has been shown to make a positive impact on your overall health. Walk, dance, stretch, or do [powwow yoga](#), move your body—to increase your heart rate and get your blood flowing. **Move your body!**

SPEND TIME OUTDOORS:

It can sometimes feel isolating. Try to go outside at least once per day. There are many opportunities to connect to the natural environment around you. Walk near a body of water, stand at the base of a tree, listen to the sounds of the birds and try to remember your connection to all of creation. Bonus: the immune boosting effects of Vitamin-D.

DRUMMING:

Drumming can be both relaxing and energizing while it helps you to ground in the present moment. It can help to relieve tension and increase your spiritual connection. Connect to the heartbeat of Mother Earth through the rhythmic sound of the drum. If you drum in time with your heartbeat, it can help you to realign with your body's natural rhythms.

ENERGY:

Your energy is your greatest protector. Fueling your mind, restorative sleep, engaging in any of the activities above and feeding your body and mind with nourishing foods and our medicines will help support stronger immune systems.

RESTORATIVE SLEEP:

Most adults require 7-9 hours of sleep each day. Set a schedule and routine for sleep. Try sleeping in a dark, quiet bedroom that is at a comfortable temperature. Avoid using electronic devices a few hours before bedtime. If possible, have a bath to help you relax before sleep. Sleep deprivation can cause overeating and weight gain, feelings of depression, a weakened immune system, lack of motivation, irritability, and problems with memory to name a few.

FOOD & WATER AS MEDICINE:

Whenever possible, try to incorporate foods that are closest to their natural form. Eating more vegetables, fruits or traditional foods and eating less processed foods will help increase your intake of Vitamin A, C, D, and zinc (a few immune supportive nutrients). Some good examples include blueberries, broccoli, carrots, oranges, oily fish, and almonds. Stay hydrated by drinking enough water each day and make water your drink of choice. How you eat is just as important as what and how much you eat. Eat mindfully with gratitude for the plant, animal or mineral that is providing you with nourishment.

TRADITIONAL MEDICINES:

While Creator's Garden is bountiful, **it is recommended to consult an Elder, Medicine Person, Ethnobotanist, Traditional Healer or healthcare practitioner before using plant medicines.**

Here are a few of the many traditional medicines that help build a strong immune system:

- **Elderberry** helps combat cold and flu symptoms, reduces inflammation and supports heart health.
- **White Pine** is also high in vitamin C and Vitamin A and can be taken as a tea.

- **Tobacco or sacred tobacco** is used as an offering and in ceremony. For those who smoke commercial tobacco, quitting has benefits and there is support.
- **Cedar** is a restorative medicine with many different uses. It can be boiled for a bath, burned for purification or taken as a tea. It is high in vitamin C.

CEDAR TEA RECIPE:

Cutting or gathering cedar is an act of humility. You are seeking help from the plant, the oldest form of life on the planet.

1. Don't take the first cedar bush or tree that you see. One will be larger than the others – this is the leader or Chief.
 - ⇒ In prayer and with tobacco, make an offering to ask the cedar for its strength to add to your strength and/or for that of your family or the person for whom you are making medicine for
 - ⇒ Use your traditional name and that of the person(s) to let the plant know who it is helping
2. Harvest ½ cup fresh cedar leaves by directly taking the leaves off the branches, or by cutting off the smaller branches (extend an offering, take only what you need)
3. Boil four cups of water, add cedar, boil for 10-15 minutes until golden in colour
4. Pour into a cup (add maple syrup for sweetness)
5. Cool and enjoy

STORE BOUGHT IMMUNE BOOSTERS:

Emergen-C,	Ginseng
Liquid Oregano Oil	Probiotics
Supplemental VitD-3	Chaga tea
Astragalus	Echinacea
Elderberry	Omega 3 Fatty Acids

If you want to try these, be sure to communicate with your health care provider.

Continue to follow your local public health advice, including wearing a mask, physically distancing and washing/sanitizing your hands.