

Fall/Winter Immune-Boosting Soup

For ages: 2 years and up
Yields: 6-8 servings

During the winter cold & flu season, you can use this basic recipe as an immune-boosting foundation. Experiment with what's in your pantry. Add vegetables &/or beans your children like. We find our kids will consume more soup if we add whole-wheat pasta. *If sensitive to wheat, try adding rice pasta, quinoa, millet or barley pearls instead.* For more protein and electrolytes, use chicken broth instead of water or cook soup with whole chicken.

- 1 large onion, chopped (antibacterial, antiviral)
- 1 leek, white part only, chopped (antibacterial, antiviral)
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (antibacterial, antiviral)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 8 cups water
- 4 or 5 astragalus* root sticks (immune stimulant, antiviral)
- 1 cup celery, chopped (fiber and vitamin source)
- 1 cup green beans, chopped (fiber and vitamin source)
- 2 cups carrots or other root vegetables, chopped (rehydrating, potassium source)
- 2 large potatoes, chopped (potassium source)
- 4 dried or 2 fresh shiitake mushrooms (immune stimulant)
- Basil, parsley, bay leaves, tarragon, or other culinary herbs to taste (antibacterial)
- 1-pound firm tofu, cut into small cubes (protein source)
- 1-2 tablespoons white miso paste (alkaline, rehydrating)
- 1-cup whole wheat or rice pasta (fiber source)

Sauté onion, leek, and garlic in oil in a large stockpot until softened. Add water and bring to a boil. Add vegetables and astragalus root. Simmer, covered, 30 minutes. Add tofu and simmer an additional 20 minutes; add herbs and pasta and simmer 10 more minutes. Remove from heat. Remove astragalus root sticks and stir in miso paste to taste. Depending on your child's tolerance, you may want to add hot pepper sauce, fresh ground pepper, or chopped green onions.

* Available for purchase at the Village Health Clinic or at a Chinese food store