

## 10 flu prevention tips to keep you healthy this winter



*Eating a quercetin-rich apple a day may indeed keep the doctor away*

The flu season occurs during the fall and winter months every year, but unlike years past, the 2009 flu season is anything but typical. Health experts estimate that a new virus, H1N1, (better known as swine flu) could infect half of the U.S. population this year, and cause more than double the number of deaths that occur during a typical flu season.

The key to warding off the flu is to keep your body functioning at its best at all times. Whether or not you decide to get an influenza shot or swine flu vaccine, there are precautions you can take that help you avoid the flu. The following is a list of 10 tips

to keep you healthy during flu season:

- 1) Wash your hands often:** Keep germs away by washing your hands frequently throughout the day. This is especially important to pass on to children, who may forget to wash their hands. Wash hands with soap and water for 15 to 30 seconds before meals, after using the restroom and in between. For quick fixes, carry a bottle of instant hand sanitizer.
- 2) Eat quercetin-rich foods:** Apples, broccoli, tea and red onions all have high concentrations of the flavonoid quercetin, which keeps your immunity running high even when your body may be low on energy. Additionally, load up on fruits and vegetables for antioxidants and other beneficial nutrients.
- 3) Get sleep and avoid stress:** During flu season, make it a priority to get 7-8 hours of sleep per night and try to avoid stress. The more you are stressed, the greater your risk of infections.
- 4) Take your daily multi-vitamin:** Make sure you are getting your daily dose of vitamins and minerals by taking multi-vitamins. You may also want to increase your intake of vitamin C during flu season in order to further boost your immune system.
- 5) Sanitize your desk and common areas:** The workplace is prone to germs! Whether it is the keyboard or mouse that you use every day or a meeting room table, consider working out a system with your co-workers to disinfect these areas and keep your office free of germs. Also, if you overhear a co-worker saying they do not feel well, encourage them to go home!
- 6) Exercise regularly:** Exercise is another way to naturally boost your immunity. Help your body fight viruses by hitting the gym in the morning or going on a long walk during lunch!

**7) Drink lots of water:** Drinking 8 to 10 glasses of water each day helps flush toxins from your system, maintain hydration and promote mucous production in your sinuses.

**8) Avoid touching your face:** Cold and flu viruses enter the body through the eyes, nose or mouth. Touching your face is a major way people develop the flu.

**9) Get fresh air:** The cold weather tends to keep people indoors, which means there are more germs circulating in rooms. Fight through the cold temperatures and make it a point to get a dose of fresh air daily!

**10) Stay home if you have any flu-like symptoms:** If you feel the flu coming on, stay home from work. Don't go back to work until symptoms clear and you are done taking medicine. Also, keep your children home from school if they complain of any symptoms.

Sources:

ABC News. <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/ColdandFluNews/Story?id=5781649>

WebMD. <http://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/cold-guide/12-tips-prevent-cold-flu>

## Studies show that pears may protect against lung cancer

Lung cancer is one of the most commonly diagnosed cancers among men and women in the United States, yet the prognosis for those diagnosed with advanced forms of this disease can be grim. According to statistics from Cancer.gov, an estimated 219,440 new cases will be diagnosed in 2009. Though no cancer is entirely preventable, two studies have shown that consuming fruit, and specifically pears, may help protect against lung cancer.

According to a National Institutes of Health (NIH) study of more than 472,000 middle aged men, those who consumed pears, sweet potatoes and carrots significantly reduced their risk of developing lung cancer. In a separate study of 521,457 participants, conducted by the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition, increasing fruit intake, including apples and pears, may be protective against lung cancer risk for both smokers and non-smokers. Researchers from both studies attributed the high concentration of antioxidants and other key nutrients found in pears as the reason why participants who ate more of the fruit could decrease their risk of lung cancer.

In addition to their protective properties, pears are fat free, high in dietary fiber and a good source of vitamin C. One medium pear contains about 24% of the daily needs for fiber and 10% of the recommendations for vitamin C.

Sources:

USA Pears. <http://www.usapears.com/en/Facts>

Cancer.gov. <http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/lung>

# Nutrition Roundup from Stemilt Growers

## Warm Pear Salad with Blue Cheese

This simple, yet elegant salad, is great for lunches or quick dinners during the fall and winter seasons. Served warm, the salad features good-for-you pears, carrots and walnuts. Recipe was adapted from Eating Well Magazine.



### Nutrition Information per serving:

384 calories; 15 g fat; 4 g saturated fat; 6 g monounsaturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 83 mg cholesterol; 32 g carbohydrate; 33 g protein; 9 g fiber; 548 mg sodium; 1,284 mg potassium

### PROCEDURE

Heat oil in a large non-stick Dutch oven over medium heat. Add pears and cook, stirring occasionally, until they start to brown (about 2 minutes). Transfer to a bowl with a slotted spoon. Whisk shallots, vinegar and mustard in a small bowl. Add the mixture to the pan and cook, stirring constantly for 30 seconds. Then, add meat, radicchio, fennel, carrots and walnuts. Cook, stirring occasionally, until just wilted (about 3 minutes). Return the pears to the pan and season with salt and pepper. Divide the lettuce leaves among 4 plates. Top with the warm salad and sprinkle with blue cheese.

### INGREDIENTS

2 TBSP Extra-virgin olive oil  
2 pears, sliced  
2 small shallots, minced  
6 TBSP sherry vinegar  
4 TSP Dijon mustard  
3 cups shredded cooked turkey  
1 large head radicchio, thinly sliced  
1 large fennel bulb, cored and thinly sliced  
2 large carrots, cut into matchsticks  
2 TBSP chopped walnuts  
12 large leaves of butter lettuce  
½ cup crumbled blue cheese  
Salt and pepper to taste

## FRUIT 101: How-To Ripen Pears

Nothing compares to the delectable taste of a perfectly ripened pear, yet determining when certain pears are ripe can be a challenge. As you may know, pears are one of the few fruits that do not fully ripen on the tree. They are harvested at full maturity, but need some time to ripen into the sweet, juicy flavors that you've come to love.

To help you determine when a pear is ready to eat, we've put together some helpful hints.

### How-To Ripen Pears:

- 1) Place unripe pears on the countertop and let them stand at room temperature. To speed up the ripening process, place your pears in a brown paper bag. Refrigeration slows the ripening process.
- 2) Each day, check your pears for ripeness by gently pressing the neck of the fruit with your thumb.
- 3) A ripe pear will give slightly when pressed.

Once you've successfully ripened your pears, you can eat them or refrigerate them for later use. Ripened pears will keep in the fridge for up to a week. Though ripeness in most varieties of pears cannot be determined just by looking at the fruit, there are a few varieties that change color when ripe, including:

**Bartlett:** Often green when found in stores, this variety ripens to a bright yellow.

**Comice:** Green in color with a red blush that covers parts of the pear's surface. The blush areas often take on a yellow hue as the pear ripens.

**Forelle:** Red lenticels (or freckles) appear in bright contrast to this pear's yellow skin when ripe.

**Starkrimson:** Crimson-colored pear that changes to a bright red as the fruit ripens.

For more information on pears, visit the 'Our Fruit' section of Stemilt's website: [www.stemilt.com](http://www.stemilt.com).

## Kid-Friendly!

## Turkey Apple Panini

This simple grilled sandwich features fresh apples, smoked turkey and cheddar cheese. Great for a quick kids lunch or nutritious after-school snack.

### INGREDIENTS

2 large Piñata, Fuji or Gala apples  
8 slices sturdy bread (such as country Italian or multi-grain)  
4 teaspoons butter, softened  
½ - ¾ pound sliced smoked turkey  
8 thin slices cheddar cheese

### PROCEDURE

Thinly slice both apples, removing the core, but leaving the skin on. Next, preheat an electric Panini press to approximately 300 degrees, or medium heat. If using a stovetop press, preheat the pan to medium.

While the press/pan is heating, assemble the sandwiches. First, lightly butter each slice of bread. With the butter side out, layer turkey, cheese and apples and then put the second piece of bread on top (butter side up). Place the sandwich on the press and close the lid. Cook until bread is toasty brown and cheese is melted. Serve warm and enjoy!



### Nutrition Information (per serving):

532 calories; 19 grams fat; 10 g saturated fat; 0 g trans fat; 58 mg cholesterol; 1190 mg sodium; 62 g carbohydrate; 10 g dietary fiber; 19 g sugar; 30 g protein