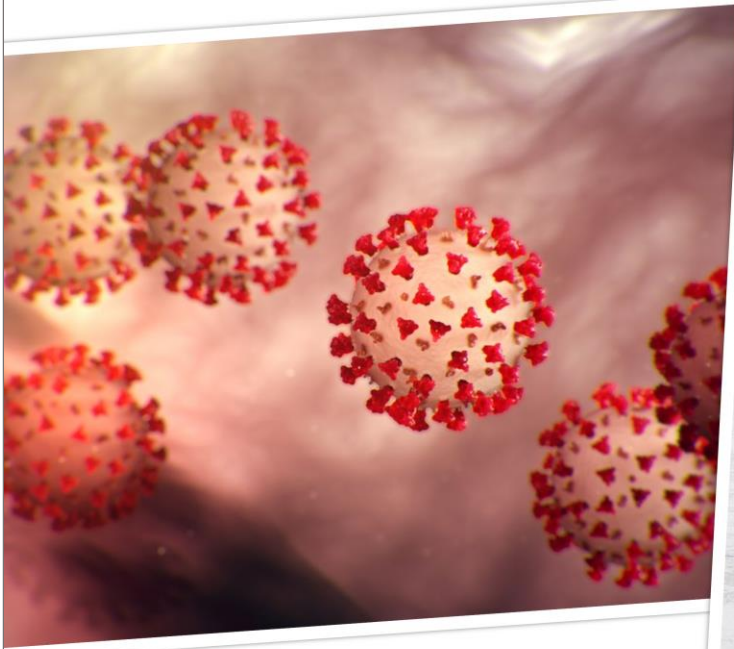




THALASSAEMIA
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A Useful Health & Nutrition Short Guide for the COVID- 19 Pandemic

A Useful Health & Nutrition Short Guide for the COVID-19 / Coronavirus Pandemic

Introduction:

The coronavirus presents many uncertainties, and none of us can completely eliminate our risk of getting infected with COVID-19. Nevertheless, one thing we can do is eat as healthily as possible.

In addition to the well-known personal hygiene and preventive measures against the new coronavirus (COVID-19), we can also follow some simple recommendations regarding our nutrition that strengthen our immune system and could better prepare us for an epidemic for in which the virus rapidly spreads to many people within a short period of time.

TIF's Medical Advisor, Dr Anastasios Giakoumis, MD PhD, Haemoglobinopathies Consultant & Internal Medicine Specialist, has compiled on behalf of TIF this short guide with helpful health and nutrition tips that can possibly boost our defenses against viruses.

What to do:

1. Make sure to be sufficiently hydrated with **2-3 liters of water consumed throughout the day**. If you come to drink water because you are thirsty, this means that you are already dehydrated.
2. Rest regularly and **sleep at least 7-8 hours daily**.
3. **Exercise** but non-exhaustively, e.g. a half-hour walk, 3 days a week.
4. Maintain **a normal body weight** through a balanced diet. Especially these days you should often **consume small and light meals**. Hot soups, such as chicken soup, and hot honey drinks are nutritious and beneficial choices.
5. **Manage stress effectively**, as it weakens your immune system.
6. **Manage chronic illnesses** that are debilitating, such as blood disorders, cardiopulmonary disease and diabetes, as best as possible.
7. **Stop smoking**. The new coronavirus can cause severe respiratory infections to which smokers are more susceptible, due to their respiratory system having already been affected by smoking.

What to eat:

There are some types of food, **commonly referred to as "superfoods"**, that are known or believed to provide your body with the necessary vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

These include:

1. Citrus fruits and their freshly squeezed juice, which are rich in hesperidin, a bioflavonoid which appears to inhibit the activity of successive virus divisions
2. Dark grapes, berries and cinnamon, as they are foods rich in procyanidins and lectins, which appear to block the attachment of the virus to the lungs through the enzyme ACE-2
3. Celery, broccoli, cauliflower, green peppers, parsley, dandelion, carrots, olive oil, mint and rosemary, with the same beneficial mechanism of action as above
4. Dairy products, which are rich in vitamin D
5. Legumes, seeds and nuts, a natural source of zinc, which is proven to support the immune system
6. Green tea and chamomile, which contain the natural antioxidant catechin
7. Sardine and mackerel, in which omega-3 fatty acids and vitamin D are abundant

Finally, probiotics (lactobacilli and bifidobacteria) and echinacea (purple coneflower) have been shown to benefit the body against viruses, but taking them requires the consent of your family doctor.

TIF tries to help you keep healthy and fit!

Discuss the above information with your peers, family and treating physician.

Your ideas, comments and experience with these nutritional tips will be very welcome.

**TIF keeps an open line with its global patient
community at all times through email communication at:**

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