

ADVERTORIAL

## Balancing Act: AHCC for Colds and Flu

By Jaime Salas Rushford, MD



CLIP AND SAVE

If you're like most American adults, you get two to four colds per year. And your chances of catching the flu, a more serious illness that can lead to hospitalization or even death, range from 5 to 20 percent each year. While there's no cure for the common cold (or the flu), there are ways to strengthen your immune system to help stave off a virus. Just be careful: The immune system is a delicately calibrated machine requiring careful handling.

How so? Understimulating your natural defenses can leave you vulnerable to infection. But overstimulating them can lead to inflammation—and research is now confirming that chronic inflammation is linked to the development of cancer, heart disease, and other illnesses.

One natural option for immune support is AHCC (short for active hexose correlated compound), an extract of hybridized shiitake mushroom mycelia (or root system) that is scientifically shown to balance the immune system without overstimulating it.

### What the Science Says

A recent study of healthy human subjects vaccinated against the flu and then treated with AHCC found the mushroom extract enhanced immune response. Blood samples showed that compared to the control group (also vaccinated but without AHCC treatment), subjects who took AHCC had significantly higher

numbers of T cells and natural killer (NK) cells—the immune cells that respond to the influenza vaccine and help it work. The rise in numbers of T cells and NK cells was most notable in subjects over 60 years old.

AHCC's flu-fighting power was also demonstrated in a study in which mice were infected with the flu virus and then treated with AHCC or water. AHCC reduced the severity of symptoms, sped recovery time, and improved the survival rate of the treated mice. Most impressive of all, while 25 percent of the untreated mice died, only 5 percent of those receiving AHCC did.

### The Perfect Balance

One of the most important ways AHCC protects the body from illness is by acting on cytokines, the messengers of the immune system. AHCC increases their production, but only when the body needs it, not when it doesn't. That's relevant, because an excess of cytokines can actually cause or worsen inflammation. Yet two studies, one on toxin-induced liver damage and one on colitis (an inflammation of the bowel), found that AHCC can actually reduce inflammation. These findings indicate AHCC's action on the immune system is a balancing one.

AHCC has also been shown to increase the number and activity of natural killer cells, macrophages, dendritic cells, and T



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cells (all different kinds of white blood cells that destroy viruses, bacteria, or abnormal cells).

There's no foolproof way to prevent colds and flu, but there are ways to give your immune system a fighting chance. Supported by over 20 human clinical studies, AHCC is one of the world's most researched immune supplements, and one of your best bets for staying well this season.

SELECTED SOURCES "Active Hexose Correlated Compound Acts as a Prebiotic and Is Anti-inflammatory in Rats with Hapten-Induced Colitis" by A. Daddaoua et al., 5/07; "Oral Administration of Active Hexose Correlated Compound Enhances Host Resistance to West Nile Encephalitis in Mice" by S. Wang et al., 3/09; "Supplementation with Active Hexose Correlated Compound Increases the Innate Immune Response of Young Mice to Primary Influenza Infection" by B. W. Ritz et al., 11/06, *J Nutr* • "Active Hexose Correlated Compound Activates Immune Function to Decrease Bacterial Load . . ." by H. Aviles et al., *Am J Surg*, 4/08 • "Active Hexose Correlated Compound Improves Immune Cell Populations After Influenza Vaccination of Healthy Subjects" by E. Gardner et al., Food Science and Human Nutrition, Michigan State University, 2010 • "Effect of AHCC on the Induction of iNOS and Proinflammatory Cytokines in LPS-Treated Mice" by T. Okumura et al., presented at the AHCC Research Association 17th Symposium, Sapporo, Japan, 2009

For more information on AHCC, please visit [www.AHCCresearch.org](http://www.AHCCresearch.org) or call 888-707-AHCC (2422).

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