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## GUT-FRIENDLY FOODS KEY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST WINTER BUGS

Looking after your gut bacteria, by choosing whole foods and prioritising probiotics, may be the key to warding off the flu this winter, according to dietitians.

Accredited Practising Dietitian Kate Gudorf said the gut plays a crucial role in immunity.

“The gut microbiota acts as our first line of defence against harmful bacteria we have ingested, helping to prevent absorption or colonisation of pathogens.

“Sometimes our gut bacteria need a helping hand, so choose foods which are high in probiotics to boost the number of healthy bacteria in your gut. Regularly eating yoghurt and fermented foods, such as kefir, tempeh, miso and sourdough bread, can all help increase good gut bacteria, which in turn assists immunity,” said Ms Gudorf, a spokesperson for the Dietitians Association of Australia.

She also recommends using winter as an excuse to eat more vegetables, which are packed full of fibre for a healthy diversity of gut bacteria.

“Only seven per cent of Australians eat the recommended five serves of vegetables a day<sup>ii</sup>. This means many of us are missing out on fibre, and other important vitamins, minerals and antioxidants, which helps ward off colds,” said Ms Gudorf.

She listed zinc and vitamin C as playing a key role in immune function.

“Zinc is found in lean meat, poultry and seafood, and also in smaller amounts in legumes, nuts and dairy foods, while vitamin C comes naturally in many fruits and vegetables,” said Ms Gudorf.

This winter, she recommends eating a ‘fruit and vegetable rainbow’ by packing meals full of in-season fresh produce.

“With vegetables, reach for a variety of colours, such as beetroot, broccoli, carrot, pumpkin, onion, celery and leek. And fruit wise, citrus fruits are in season, along with other favourites like kiwifruit, apples and rhubarb.

“So why not make an immune-boosting meal such as a beef and vegetable casserole, finished off with a bowl of yoghurt with fruit for dessert,” Ms Gudorf suggests.

It’s sure to leave you with a good gut feeling. **ENDS**

**For further information or to organise an interview with Kate Gudorf contact Pattie King,  
Dietitians Association of Australia, on 0409 661 920.**

## Cinnamon Roasted Chickpeas & Vegetables with Yoghurt Dressing

Serves: 4-6 | Prep Time: 15 mins | Cooking Time: 35 – 50 minutes

### Ingredients

- ¼ kent pumpkin, sliced
- 1 beetroot, diced into large chunks
- 1 ½ tbsp Extra virgin olive oil
- 1 ½ tsp cinnamon, ground
- Salt and pepper, to season
- 2 zucchinis, chopped lengthways
- 1 rosemary sprig
- 1 can chickpeas, drained, rinsed
- 3 tbsp Greek yoghurt
- ½ lemon, juiced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp pepita seeds

### Method

1. Preheat oven to 180°C and line baking tray with baking paper.
2. Lay out pumpkin and beetroot on a baking tray. Drizzle half of the olive oil over the top, sprinkle with cinnamon and season with salt and pepper. Toss to coat. Then transfer tray to oven.
3. After 20-30 minutes, take the tray out of the oven and add chopped zucchini, rosemary sprigs and chickpeas. Season with olive oil, cinnamon, salt and pepper and return to the oven for a further 15-20 minutes.
4. To make the yoghurt dressing, mix Greek yoghurt, lemon, garlic, salt and pepper.
5. Remove tray from oven and allow to cool. Alternatively, if you would like to eat warm, drizzle some of the yoghurt dressing over the roasted vegetables, sprinkle with pepita seeds and enjoy!

***This recipe is courtesy of Anna Debenham and Alex Parker, Accredited Practising Dietitians of The Biting Truth.***

*Recipe image available on request by contacting [media@daa.asn.au](mailto:media@daa.asn.au)*

<sup>1</sup> Practice-based Evidence in Nutrition. Knowledge Pathway: Gastrointestinal system – Microbiota background. Available from: <https://www.pennutrition.com/KnowledgePathway.aspx?kpid=24357&trid=25391&trcatid=38>

<sup>ii</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics. Australian Health Survey: Nutrition First Results – Foods and Nutrients, 2011-12. Available from: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4364.0.55.001~2014-15~Main%20Features~Daily%20intake%20of%20fruit%20and%20vegetables~28>