

# A Healthy Season

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## Tips to stay healthy this season

Health Canada tells us that most Canadians spend more than 90% of their time indoors during winter months. More time indoors and exposure to extreme cold can equal more viruses passed in winter months. Your player is going to school, managing home chores, having a social/family life, possibly working a part-time job and enjoying game and practice time on the ice.

How can you help your busy player have a healthy hockey season? Here are suggestions to deal with staying healthy through healthy winter diet and healthy behaviors.

### Healthy fuel

Did you know there are still antioxidant rich foods around in winter? As an alternative to summer fruits, here are 10 foods available in winter that are packed with anti-oxidants to help keep you on the ice:

1. Artichoke hearts—low in calories and high in minerals and antioxidants, artichoke hearts also have about four grams of protein per two hearts
2. Beans—both pinto and kidney rate the highest in antioxidants and kidney adds a helpful dose of iron--burritos anyone?
3. Cranberries—'tis the season for the berry from the bog and whether you compote or bake in breads or muffins, cranberries are an antioxidant wonder
4. Pecans—on par with cranberries for antioxidant content--there's a great muffin waiting to happen
5. Prunes—high in two major types of antioxidants and while unpopular with some, they can be chopped in cookies, on oatmeal or bought in a jam/spread
6. Granny Smith apples—an apple a day means something after all, this type ranked higher than gala and red delicious—but wash and eat the skin, it's where some of that goodness is found
7. Cloves—not just for studding oranges at the holidays, this warming winter spice is high in antioxidants and great in tea, breakfast oatmeal and delicious enjoyed in South Asian dishes
8. Green tea—keeps you healthy not only just by it's comforting warmth but with high level of anti-oxidants
9. Garlic—evidently has both anti-oxidants against viruses and bacteria; spice up and share with your family for winter health
10. Elderberries—in juices or as an extract, this is berry is the new star of the anti-oxidant set

### Healthy behavior

Mostly common sense, these healthy behavior tips are probably more what you've heard from your grandparents and are not meant to replace care by your family physician. Pick what works for you and your family to stay well and enjoy an outstanding hockey season!

The Red Cross suggests these healthy tips:

- **Take sips of plain water** to stay hydrated during games or practice—the cold may mask dehydration but the need to drink water remains—sipping keeps the water in the body longer than gulping
- **Use a cold-air humidifier at night** if your child suffers from winter nosebleeds, or try saline nose drops/spray may help to keep tissues moist
- **Wash your hands frequently.** Doctors agree that thorough and frequent hand washing is one of the easiest and best ways to prevent the spread of the flu and many other diseases
- **Use hand sanitizer gels.** Keep a supply of hand sanitizer gels on hand for times when you can't get to a sink
- **Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth.** Cold and flu viruses enter the body this way—use saline nasal spray to keep nasal passages free from viruses
- **Keep surfaces clean.** Stock up on antibacterial wipes and use them in public restaurants and bathrooms during peak flu and cold season—wipe down any gear or hockey equipment that is used by more than one player
- **Avoid close contact.** If your child or you are ill, stay home from work, school or practice to avoid spreading the illness to others
- **Maintain healthy habits** like cutting down on smoking and excessive drinking and adding probiotics through yoghurt and supplements--can strengthen the body's ability to fight disease
- **Layer up** with wicking (not cotton) fabrics next to the body, during high activity your player will decrease the chance of hypothermia
- **Get to sleep** to make sure your body is fully capable of fighting off illnesses this winter, create a consistent bedtime routine
- **Taking a daily multi-vitamin** is a simple step that can play an important role in keeping your body healthy
- **Get a flu shot** at many flu clinics in grocery stores and pharmacies where or check with your family doctor
- **Wear sunglasses** to avoid dangerous snow and ice glare and make sure to wear sunglasses or appropriate UV protection for your eyes if playing or practicing out of doors
- **SPF factor** still remains in the winter-remember that if you play with exposed skin, use some SPF protection

While ScotiaHockey.com does not manage or support the content of other sites, here are some further links to help keep your family healthy during this hockey season. We always welcome your insight and tips about this and any subjects relating to minor league hockey—<mailto:info@scotiahockey.com>. [WC: 876]

Health Canada's food guide

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>

Canada's Healthy Living Unit

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/fitness/index.html>

Canadian Red Cross

<http://www.redcross.ca/article.asp?id=20590&tid=021>