

A Bit of Dirt...

Many years ago, when my brother and sisters and I were children, and we were playing in our back garden, my brother clutched a handful of earth and put it into his mouth. One of my sisters rushed into the kitchen crying, "Mummy! Mummy! Andrew's eating earth! Andrew's eating earth!"

Mum, unflappable as always, simply said, "Oh, a bit of dirt never hurt anyone", as she calmly wiped her hands on her apron, strode into the garden, scooped up Andrew under her arm, whisked him inside, and deprived him of his tasty snack.

Mum had been a pathology technician before becoming a mother to four children, and she was quite familiar with the workings of the body's God-given immune system. If Mum wasn't fazed, then we children didn't see any need to be either.

As with every single aspect of His creation, God has designed our immune systems perfectly to repel foreign and harmful invaders. T-cells, B-cells, stem-cells, helper-cells, memory-cells... we have an amazing natural immune system that fights off all manner of threats to our health and well-being: be they small amounts of 'dirt' or more serious germs, viruses, and bacteria [1].

And we keep our immune systems topped up with nutritious foods, water, plenty of exercise, sufficient sleep, physical and social interaction with others, and a goodly amount of sunshine.

During this past year though, the normal workings of our immune systems have been severely compromised. Praise God for His goodness – He gave us many weeks of very warm, dry, and sunny weather during the spring period of lockdown so that when we did go out and about, we benefitted from plenty of vitamin D.

But now that we are entering the colds and flu season, we may find that the continued months of lockdowns, self-isolations and quarantines, social/physical

distancing, and mask-wearing will have left many of us with diminished immunity capabilities just at the time of year when they are most needed.

Thus, along with winter diets extra-rich in green leafy vegetables, citrus fruits and oily fish, it may be helpful to consider taking extra supplements of vitamins C and D as well as other vitamins and minerals, to stave off the usual winter ailments...

For more on the topic of immune-boosting foods and vitamins, please see:

<https://www.bayith.org/ComingOutOfLockdownRebuildingOurImmuneSystems.pdf>

[1] After reading this item, my sister, a nurse, reminded me that for the first three+ months of our lives we are dependent on our mother's immune system; thereafter we start to accumulate our own immunity – one of the reasons that toddlers try to put everything into their mouths. Though we decry it as 'dirty' and take the offending item away from the small child, it is in fact one of God's ways of developing their immune system.

Home-Made Bone Broths

Another excellent way of boosting our immune health during the winter months is to make our own broths from chicken carcasses and the bones of lamb and beef, which can then form the basis of soups, stews, curries, casseroles, gravies, etc...

"Homemade bone broth [speeds] healing and recuperation from illness, and it contains many valuable vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients that support your immune function ... [Bone broth] inhibits infection caused by cold and flu viruses" [Mercola.com].

For more information on the health benefits of homemade bone broths, please see here:

<https://www.bayith.org/HealthNutritionHomemadeBoneBroth.pdf>

For boiling-up the chicken carcass to make broth, please see here:

<https://www.bayith.org/HealthNutritionBoilingChickenBonesToMakeBroth.pdf>

See below for a warming winter soup made with home-made chicken broth...

*May God bless you and keep you well this winter,
Elizabeth McDonald
31 October 2020*

(A slightly different version of this item first appeared in the Nov 2020 – Jan 2021 edition of the Frindsbury Baptist Church magazine)

Cock-A-Leekie Soup

Approximately four servings:

A knob of butter, or a slosh of olive oil

One large white onion or 4-5 shallots, chopped quite small

Two large leeks, and two medium carrots, chopped quite small

A couple of cloves of garlic, crushed or finely chopped

Lots of left-over chicken bits or flakes

Home-made chicken broth, as much as required, plus 1-2 stock cubes

Salt, pepper, a shake of dried parsley, thyme, or rosemary

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Heat the butter or olive oil in a large saucepan or soup pot

Tip in the chopped onion/shallots, sweat until translucent (not brown)

Throw in the chopped leeks and carrots, stir for another minute or so

Stir in the chopped garlic (don't allow the garlic to burn)

Pour in the home-made chicken broth and crumble in the stock cube(s)

Add in the chicken bits and shake in salt, pepper, and herbs to taste

Cook on a medium heat until the leeks and carrots have softened

Taste, and add more water if required

Serve with warm rolls, toast, flatbreads, or oat biscuits

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