

# Maintaining Body Immunity with Proper Nutrition Intake during Pandemic

Friday, 24 July 2020 WIB, By: Natasa Adelayanti




UGM Update, newly, presents health talk for the third time on Thursday (7/23). This health talk is for an encore held online, which is broadcast live through UGM Youtube channel, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @ugm.yogyakarta. The theme of the talk entitled "Nutrition and Immunity Intake during Pandemic Period" with guest speaker Dr. Mirza Hapsari Sakti Titis Panggalih, S.Gz., MPH., RD., as UGM Nutritionist.

Mirza started her presentation by explaining three interrelated things in the mechanism of disease transmission. They are the host (or ourselves), the environment, and the carrier (or source of the disease, in this case, Covid-19). Concerning these things, there are preventive ways with several approaches to counteracting it. There is, namely an excellent environmental approach by applying the principle of clean living and an approach to building a safe and healthy body (immunity).

The following approach, according to Mirza, is not as easy as one might imagine because of the complexity of the immune system. Some things that can build our body's immunity, such as having exercise and getting used to proper and balanced nutrition.

Relevant to her field, Mirza explained the role of nutrition in boosting the immune system is to



restrain the stressor or factors that trigger inflammation in the body. There are specific types of nutrients to build immunity, include proteins, vitamins A, C, E, and zinc. "Each group of people have their personal needs. Therefore, each of them has a different intake," she explained.

Mirza explained that several age groups, such as children and the elderly, must be given more attention and control so that Covid-19 does not easily infect them because they are under control. The impact because of these differences is the effect of the particular condition that they have.

"It indeed has the same virus, but the effect will be different. For example, in the healthy nutrition group, symptoms of inflammation of the throat may occur. While in the low nutrition group, they can even drop because it attacks various body systems," Mirza said.

Furthermore, regarding nutritional intake, Mirza said there are indeed many food sources from these substances which are relatively expensive. However, that is not the reason. She stated to fulfil these substances; we can look for food ingredients with the same content but get affordable prices.

First the protein, Mirza said we could absorb it from egg consumption. It is affordable and easy to find. Then, vitamin A as far as we know is only for the eyes, is also potent as the immune source. The source can be from food ingredients in yellow and orange, such as carrots and pumpkin.

"We can also absorb it from consumption of beef or chicken livers, but this is recommended for special groups, especially with people who have anaemia, another is such as pregnant women, children for growth, and women coming to their periods," she said.

Furthermore, for Vitamin C, Mirza said we could absorb it by consuming fruits and vegetables. It is like guava, orange, papaya, and broccoli which is quite cheap and easy to obtain. For Vitamin E, according to her, they can be obtained by consumption of olive oil, corn oil, margarine, and the highest is sunflower oil. Although usually used in small amounts, but the content is entirely meaningful for our health.

Finally, Mirza regretted the easy nutritional intake, but it is still not a habit of the Indonesian people to drink milk. "Although the campaign is relatively intense, it is still difficult to fulfil. Milk contains many substances that can build our immune system. I have a suggestion, especially for the elderly and children, to start having a good habit of consuming milk," she concluded.

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