

As the winter months approach, everyone is looking to stay healthy, and the best approach is to strengthen your immune system. Registered dietician Grace Pascale shares some of her favorite foods and ingredients for healthy immune support.

"You want to see a rainbow in your refrigerator," said Pascale, a San Diego-area dietician who offers healthy nutrition tips to her followers on Instagram (@BabyByChickpeas).

Pascale says eating a lot of colorful fruits and vegetables gives your body the antioxidants and vitamins (e.g., zinc, selenium, iron, protein, and vitamins C and D) it needs to ward off free radicals, the molecules that are produced when your body breaks down unhealthy foods or you smoke tobacco.

Elderberries are a great example of why "eating the rainbow" is a savvy nutritional goal. These berries, which have been eaten and used as dyes in many cultures for thousands of years, come in a variety of colors, including red, blue, purple, and — most notably — black.

# The Best Foods for Supporting Your Immune System



PHOTO: MOYO STUDIO

Each color touts its own unique nutritional benefits, but elderberries are most known for being rich in anthocyanins; a compound with strong antioxidant properties. These anthocyanins — which cause dark pigmentation, so are most abundant in black elderberries — can help support a healthy immune system, making elderberries a much-sought-after food. However, they are toxic to eat if not properly cooked beforehand.

"I first found out about black elderberry syrup in grad school, and we made it for ourselves," Pascale said. "We had to sterilize jars, we had to keep elderberries and boil them, and then we had to mix in the sugar — it was a whole messy process."

## Easy immune support

Fortunately, Sambucol has made it easier than ever to mix this superfood into your daily

routine. Their black elderberry syrups, gummies, tablets, and more are safely pre-cooked and ready to eat.

Sambucol products are made using only the premium Haschberg variety of black elderberries, which grows at high elevations in soil-rich Central Europe. These berries ensure Sambucol is packed with the antioxidants and immune-supporting nutrients families are looking for.

"Sambucol Black Elderberry really helps out our family," said Pascale, a mother of two. "We're dealing with preschools and daycare, and just all the germs, so it's really important that our family stays as strong immune-wise as possible."

Pascale says you can add Sambucol Black Elderberry to smoothies, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, overnight oats, and much more to create delicious, immune-boosting meals.

"I'll stir a little bit into sparkling water to create an evening mocktail," she said. "One of my favorite applications is to mix a little bit into maple syrup, and my kids will go ahead and dip pancakes into that." □

Dustin Brennan

## Sambucol<sup>®</sup> BLACK ELDERBERRY

If you're looking for a delicious and easy way to support your immune system for the winter months, you can shop for Sambucol Black Elderberry products online at [sambucolusa.com/collections/shop-all](https://sambucolusa.com/collections/shop-all).

## Very Berry Açai & Elderberry Smoothie

### Ingredients:

- 1 packet of frozen açai
- 1 banana
- 1 cup of fresh or frozen berries: strawberry, blueberry, raspberry, and blackberry
- 1/2 cup almond or oat milk
- 1-2 tbsp of Sambucol Black Elderberry Syrup
- Sliced almonds to garnish (optional)

### Instructions:

1. Add everything to blender and blend to enjoy a delicious smoothie packed with vitamins and antioxidants to support your immune system.
2. Garnish with fruit and a sprinkle of sliced almonds to add texture and a bit of crunchiness.



## PB&J Elderberry Overnight Oats

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup plant milk
- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 1/2 tbsp maple syrup
- 2 tbsp peanut butter
- Strawberry jam
- Fresh fruit of choice
- 2 tbsp Sambucol Advanced Immune Black Elderberry Syrup

### Instructions:

1. Combine oats, plant milk, chia seeds, maple syrup, and peanut butter in a bowl. Mix and refrigerate for 2+ hours or overnight.
2. Remove from fridge and layer in fresh fruit, globs of crunchy peanut butter, a dollop of strawberry jam, and drizzle with Sambucol Advanced Immune Black Elderberry Syrup for added immune-supporting sweetness.



By Gracie Pascale @babybychickpeas