When heading into cold and flu season, what is your plan? Cross your fingers and hope? Follow the medical advice you get on talk shows, TV ads, blogs, social networks or from family conversations? Regardless, where you hear it, most likely you will hear the perennial warning "It's flu season… you need a flu shot."

Let's face it, vaccinations are big business. Pharmaceutical companies spend hundreds of millions of dollars developing vaccines and bringing them to market. They also devote a large chunk of their budget to sell it. You can even get a flu shot at Walmart.

On the other hand, I'm sure you've heard others questioning whether the flu shot is safe. Are they just paranoid? What do you do? Ultimately, the decision is up to you; but as for me, I take a wellness approach to the cold and flu season, and it works for me and has for most everyone I've recommended it to.

There are "flu shot alternatives" available. Of course I am talking about the process of strengthening your immune system and building foundational reserves before you get exposed to bugs.

I am reminded of a story relayed by Dr. John Cannell a few years ago. Dr. Cannell is a physician at a psychiatric unit in California. He was familiar with the research on vitamin D and how it facilitates a strong immune system. As a test, Dr. Cannell placed a group of his patients on adequate levels of vitamin D. That year the flu was unusually virulent and just about everyone in the hospital got sick, nurses, support staff, literally every patient in the hospital. Everyone, that is, except his group of vitamin D sufficient patients. They were not affected by the flu except for minor sniffles. It
was an amazing demonstration of flu prevention.

However, he is quick to add that vitamin D is not the cure for the flu. Dr. Cannell recommends everyone get tested for vitamin D and maintain sufficient levels to foster healthy genetic expression. Of the 20,000 genes identified researchers say we need vitamin D for approximately 3,000 of them to function. But vitamin D isn't the only nutrient star. The white blood cells need folic acid, B12, and zinc to name a few, to do battle effectively.

The zinc "taste test" to assess for zinc is a test that can be done for pennies. We need zinc to make hydrochloric acid. Zinc is needed for well over 100 enzyme reactions. Having these enzymatic reactions working properly can have far reaching effects, ranging from pain reduction to reducing depression. A study published indicated that high doses of zinc would help to control the release of histamine from basophils and mast cells. Zinc may be a key factor if you are allergy sensitive. If you attain sufficient levels of zinc in the fall it could make the difference in how you feel when spring allergy season arrives. So testing for zinc goes far beyond preventing or reducing flu symptoms.

In addition to vitamin D and zinc, I also recommend an immune replenishing multiple like Bio-Immunozyme Forte. Some people take it instead of their multiple vitamin during winter months, while others add Bio-Immunozyme Forte to support important trace nutrients that the body needs to keep the immune system in balance. Bio-Immunozyme Forte is a unique, broad-spectrum multiple designed to specifically support normal, healthy immune function. It provides a wide array of vitamin, mineral, botanical, amino acid and organ / glandular specific support.

We don't want to over stimulate the immune system. In fact, we want the right balance to protect against the "cytokine storm" effect which can cause death during certain devastating pandemic flues. Prevention like this is solid nutritional science. A Wellness approach can strengthen your body's natural defense system, no drugs, and no side effects.

You can start now to build nutritional reserves in the cells and strengthen the body's infrastructure to promote natural immunity. Ask your Wellness clinician about "flu shot alternatives" and a wellness approach to preventing colds and flues. Along with my recommendations here, your clinician may suggest manual manipulation, reducing sugar intake, stress management, vitamin C or probiotics. Promoting healthy levels of vitamin D, zinc, vitamins and trace minerals. Ultimately you are building cellular reserves.

Cellular reserves are the nutrient levels that help rebuild and repair your body. And you can enjoy the benefits even beyond cold and flu season.