



FACTSHEET

CORONAVIRUS MISCONCEPTIONS: BUSTED

Boost your immunity with Vitamin C supplements! Eat lots of garlic! Wash your fruit and veg with detergent when you get home from the supermarket! Tales of coronavirus cures (and novel ways to protect yourself from the pandemic) have infiltrated the internet over the past few weeks – but many of these so-called magical elixirs aren't actually worth their salt. To separate fact from fiction, here's the answers you can trust.

Myth 1: COVID-19 can be transmitted through food.

COVID-19 is a respiratory infection, not a gastrointestinal infection or foodborne illness. It spreads via respiratory droplets entering your eyes, nose and airways from coughs and sneezes. According to Food Standards Australia New Zealand, there is no evidence to suggest COVID-19 is transferred through food.



Myth 2: You should wash your fruit and vegetables in detergent.

Soap and washing up detergent are not intended for human consumption. It may actually be very dangerous to ingest these products. A good rinse under cold water just before you eat or cook with raw fruit and veggies is usually all you need to ensure it is safe to consume. Some sturdier foods like potatoes or apples can be scrubbed with a clean brush to remove dirt. In addition, washing and storing fruit and veg can quickly lead to spoilage, so washing it only as you're about to use it ensures its longevity in your crisper.

Myth 3: Drinking alcohol will protect you from COVID-19.

It's true that strong alcohol can kill coronaviruses when used as hand sanitiser, but drinking alcohol will not protect you from COVID-19 and can actually be bad for your health.



Myth 4: Vitamin C supplements are good for your immunity.

Vitamin C is essential for a healthy immune system, but for the average Joe, there is absolutely no benefit to consuming it in megadoses. Why? Vitamin C is a water-soluble vitamin, meaning your body eliminates the excess via your urine. For adults, the recommended daily intake is 45 milligrams – to put that into perspective, you'd get more than double that from just two kiwi fruits. It's extremely easy (and far cheaper) to get enough immunity-boosting Vitamin C from a healthy diet that includes two serves of fruit and five serves of veg a day. There's simply no need to turn to supplements.

Myth 5: Eating garlic will protect you from COVID-19.

Yes, garlic is a very healthy food. It contains a compound called allicin, which is antibacterial, and it has anti-cancer properties. Plus, garlic is an excellent flavour booster in place of excess salt. But is it the key to stopping the current global pandemic? Probably not. There is currently no evidence to show that garlic is protective against COVID-19. As is the case with most things in the world of nutrition, there's no such thing as a magic bullet. Feel free to add garlic to your meals if you wish, but don't bother downing it by the bulb.