

How To Build Up Your Flu-Season Immunity

(NAPSA)—Getting a flu shot is recommended for older adults or anyone with a health problem that might put them at greater risk of complications. But there's a limit to what flu shots can do. A vaccine won't protect you from every virus.

In an average year, 5 to 20 percent of Americans get infected with some form of influenza.

For many people that means a loss of work, pneumonia and even hospitalization.

Fortunately, there are other steps you can take to boost your immune system and prevent the onset of the disease. The following tips may help keep you healthy this flu season:

- Wash your hands. Wipe down your desk and phone. Avoid crowds, especially the crowd in your doctor's waiting room, if at all possible.

- Teach your children to cough into the crook of their elbow rather than cover their mouth with their hand. This helps prevent the spread of germs via handshaking or touching things.

- Bulk up your immune system by eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables.

A preliminary laboratory study found that components in cranber-



New research suggests a compound in cranberries keeps the flu virus from reproducing.

ries can prevent certain type A and type B flu viruses from attaching to host cells and causing subsequent infection setting the stage for more research in the area.

In the fight against the flu, it is just as important for the public to be concerned with good nutrition as with getting a flu shot. Cranberry juice cocktail should not be used as a treatment for infection, but may be an effective part of a prevention routine. Remember, as with any infection, a health care provider should always be consulted.