

Hot List

Recover post-run with warm, immune-boosting foods for those colder runs.

By Liz Applegate Ph.D.

After a [winter run](#), there's nothing better than warming up with a hot meal. The best choices not only heat you from within but also speed recovery. Many of these dishes pack nutrients that boost your ability to fend off illness—good news, given that most of us will have at least two colds this winter.

OATMEAL AND COFFEE

Steel-cut oats provide loads of carbs to refuel muscles. And research shows that pairing those carbs with caffeinated coffee boosts glycogen stores even more than eating carbs alone. Top your oatmeal with almonds, banana, and a splash of milk to add vitamin E, [potassium](#), and calcium.

CHICKEN-NOODLE SOUP

Some studies show that this comfort food can decrease symptoms of the common cold. The warm broth, herbs, celery, onions, and carrots help reduce inflammation in your airways and ease breathing. The soup may also decrease the effect of neutrophils, a white blood cell that's partially to blame for flu symptoms.

CARBO CHOWDER

A key ingredient in chowder is carb-rich potatoes or corn, which, according to studies from Appalachian State University, protect immune cells weakened by a hard run. Seafood is high in zinc, which is crucial for immune health. Studies show that runners may not get enough of this mineral. Try my chowder recipe (right) or warm up canned varieties with fewer than five grams of fat per serving.

SAVORY STEW

As a runner you may not get enough iron needed for building blood cells that transport oxygen to power your muscles. And a recent study from Italy finds that women athletes have lower iron stores than inactive women. Meat stews are packed with 20 percent of your iron needs along with protein; add potatoes, carrots, and parsnips to boost fiber and vitamins.