

Why Some People Never Become Infected With COVID-19

Immunity is very much linked to several aspects of our character, including our daily habits, stress levels, and even how honest we are

PREMIUM HEALTH VIEWPOINTS



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Leukocytes attack the virus in the immune system. (Yurchanka Siarhei/Shutterstock)

With the ongoing surge of COVID-19 infections in China, many are shocked by its scale and worried about a potential new wave hitting the rest of the world.

Let's take a close look into the factors that affect our [antiviral immunity](#), and how to better protect yourself if another wave hits where you live.

Some People Never Get Infected by Viruses

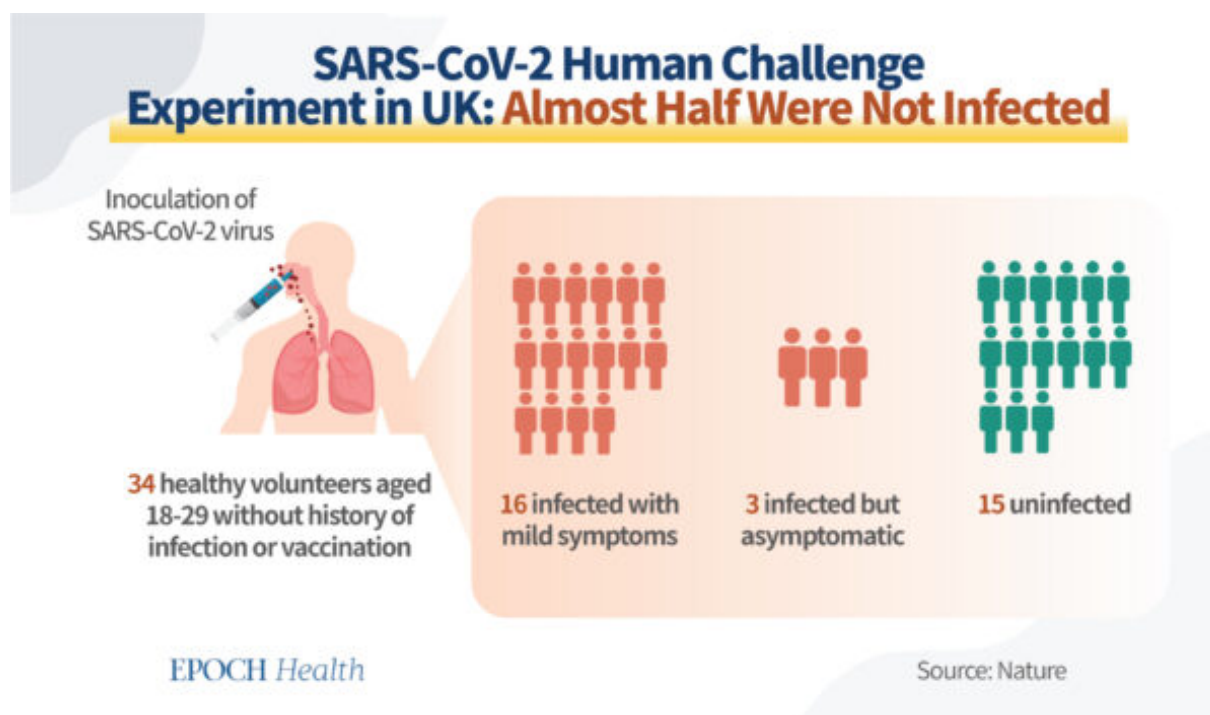
Looking at pandemics throughout history, one can't ignore the impact of the Black Death, which swept across Europe and reduced the population by more than half in some areas. Yet, some people never got sick.

Cholera assailed Europe, but some people stayed uninfected, even though they ate the same contaminated food and drank the same tainted water.

Some doctors and nurses dedicated their lives to the leprous tribes, and yet they never contracted the bacterial infection.

[Two human challenge trials](#) were done during the 1918 Spanish flu by two independent groups of doctors in Boston and San Francisco with 62 and 50 healthy volunteers, respectively. Regardless of how many aggressive means were taken to try to infect people (even dropping mucus or bodily fluids from flu patients into the healthy volunteers' eyes, noses, or throats), none of the participants became infected.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a SARS-CoV-2 human challenge study [published in Nature](#) in 2022 found that of the 36 healthy volunteers inoculated with the SARS-CoV-2 virus intranasally, only a little more than half became infected with mild symptoms, and the other half remained uninfected. Two were excluded from the per-protocol analysis, so the experiment went on with 34 participants.



In the COVID-19 human challenge experiment in the UK, almost half were not infected. (The Epoch Times)

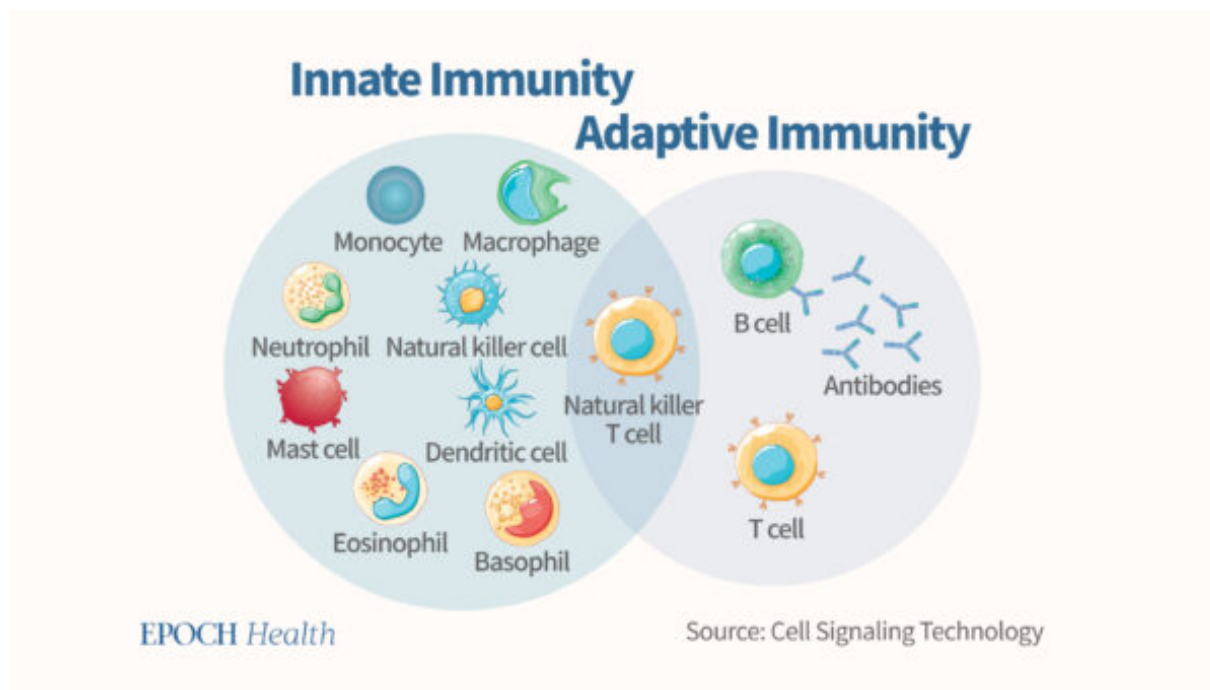
These experiments show that some people just don't get infected.

Viruses 'See' People With Weakened Immunity

While people may look similar on the outside, we look very different in the microscopic world of viruses. Our immune systems look different, too.

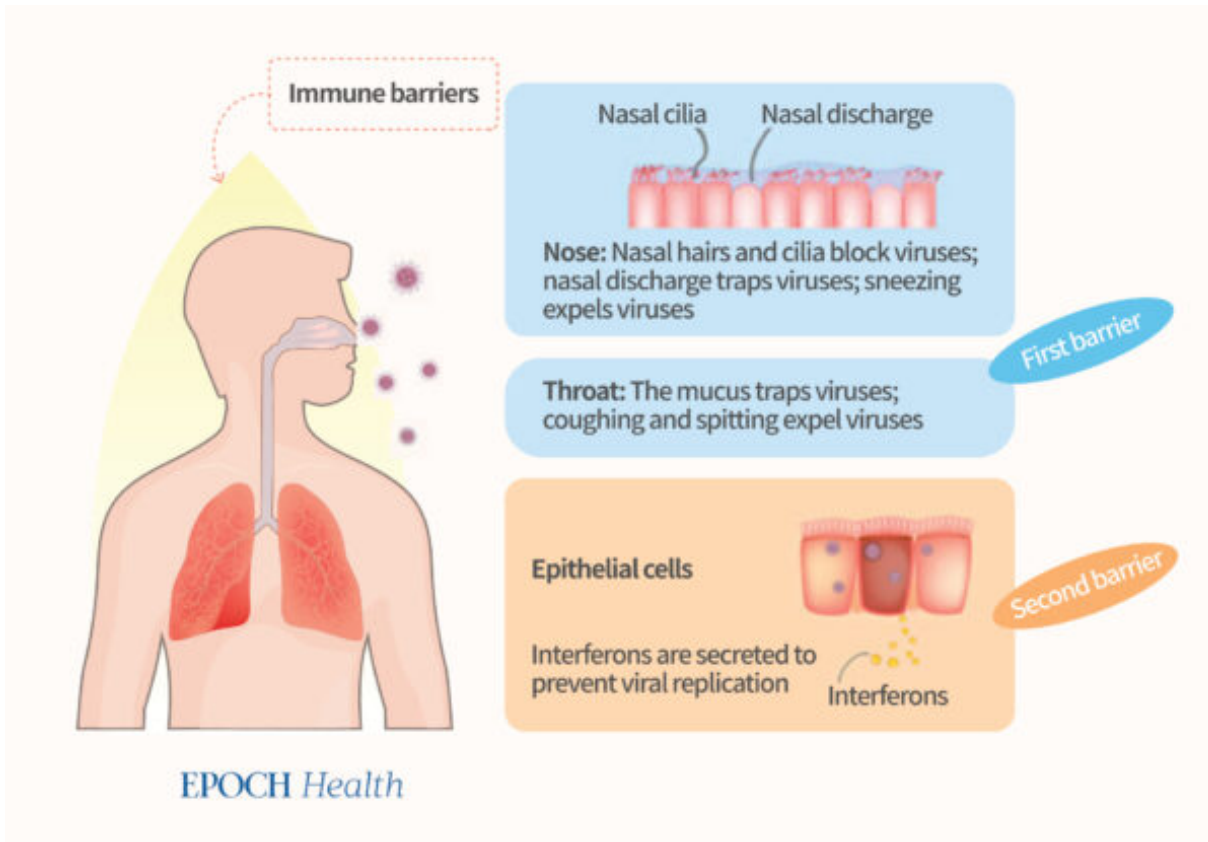
The immune system we were born with is a sophisticated design. It has layer upon layer of defenses and acts like an army protecting us 24/7 against various viruses and bacteria.

Viruses need suitable cells to hijack so they can replicate. If a person's cells are in a good antiviral state, there's no soil for the virus to spread its roots, so to speak, so that person won't become infected.



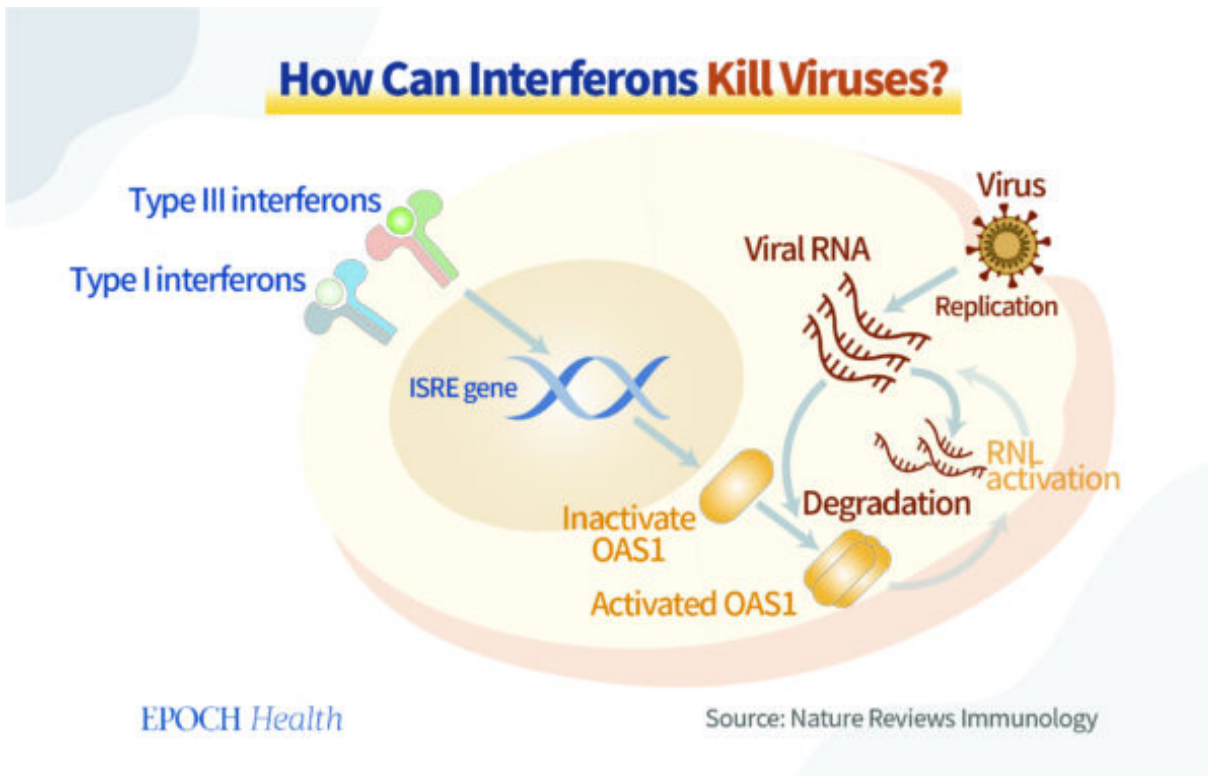
Our bodies resist viruses through innate immunity and adaptive immunity. (The Epoch Times)

For instance, mucosal epithelial cells in our nose can automatically secrete a substance that puts this cell into an antiviral state.



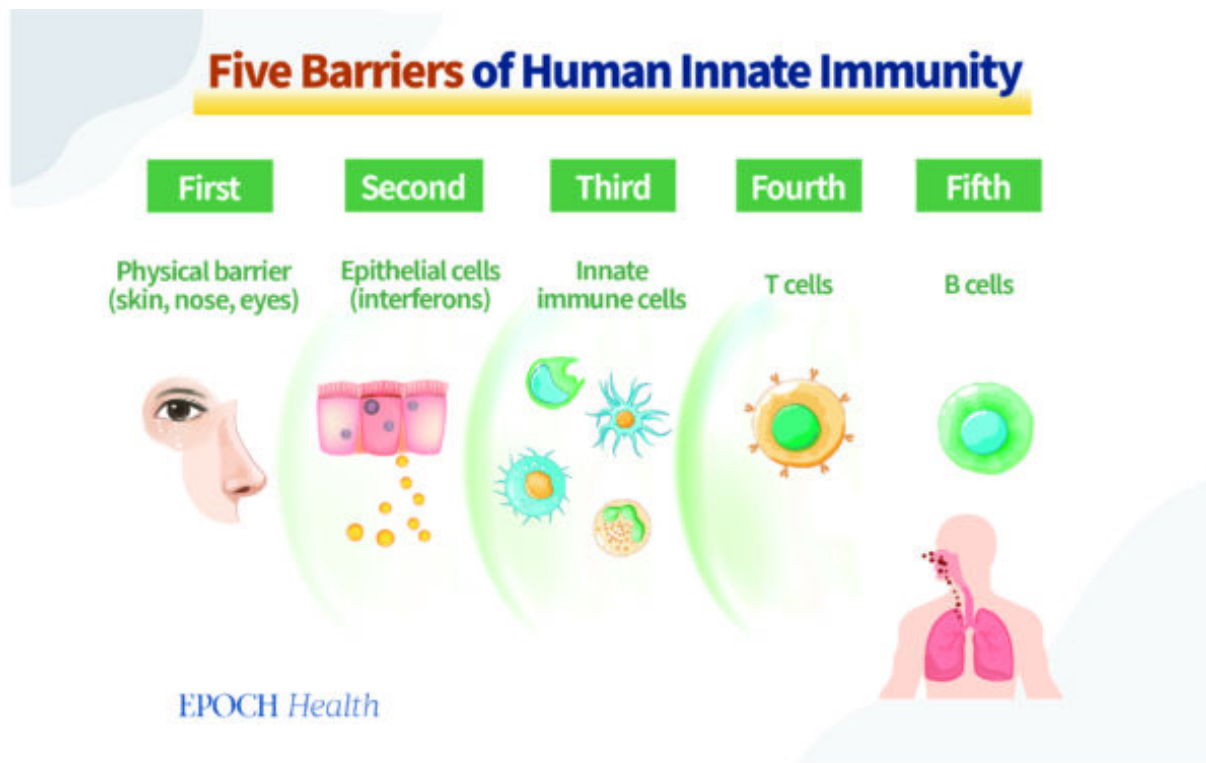
Your body has several layers of defense against viruses. (The Epoch Times)

This substance is called interferon. It interferes with the replication of the virus, breaking down its protein, enzymes, and RNA so that the virus can't survive in these cells.



Interferons interfere with the replication of the virus. (The Epoch Times)

Going deeper, there are a variety of immune cells, such as natural killer (NK) cells, macrophages, and lymphocytes. Each cell is like a special soldier possessing special skills to fight viruses.



Five barriers of human innate immunity. (The Epoch Times)

Even if you become infected, if your immune system is strong, you will suffer only mild illness and quickly recover.

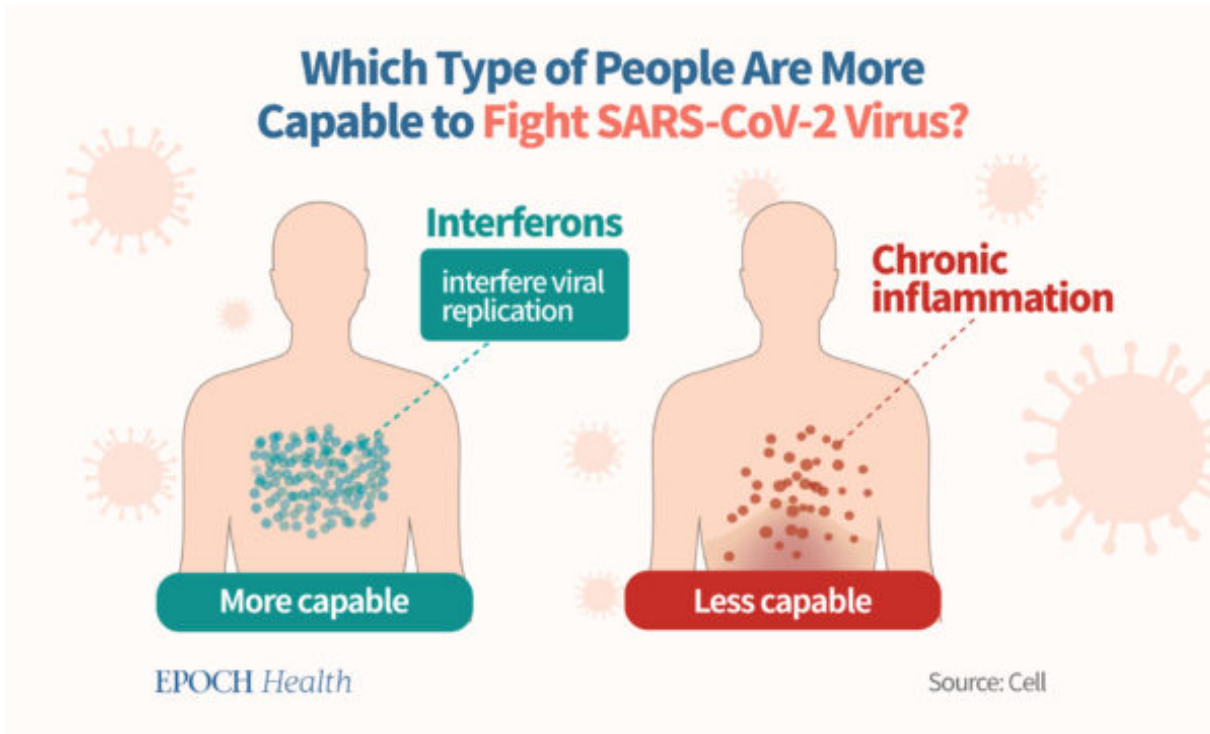
Research published in the journal [Scientific Reports of Nature](#) proves that at the early stage of infection, the more interferon that's present, the lower the incidence of developing severe symptoms of COVID.

On the contrary, if a person has poor antiviral immunity, the virus is more likely to infect cells, replicate, and establish a devastating presence in the person's body.

2 States of Immunity

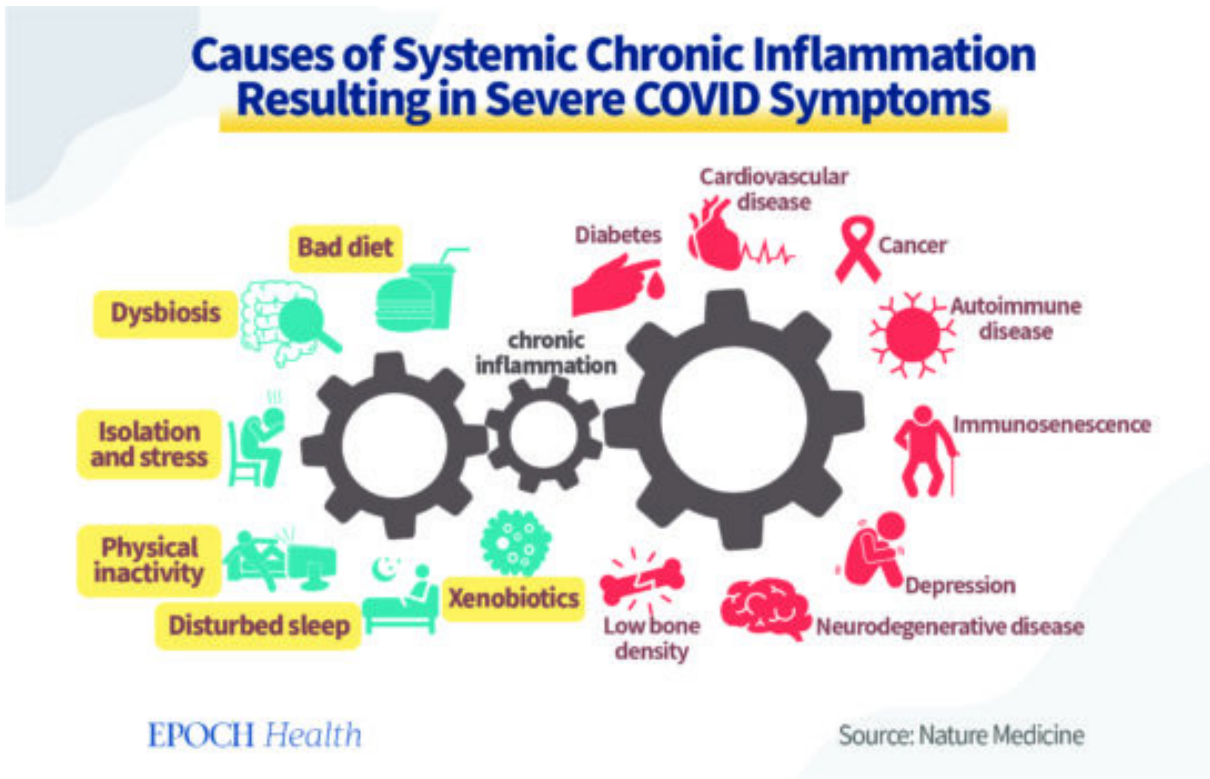
There are generally two distinct states of immune response—one healthy and effective, the other not.

The first state is the antiviral state. It's characterized by strong antiviral immunity from immune cells that can secrete interferons to eradicate viruses. The second is the systemic chronic inflammation state. This state makes people susceptible to viral infections.



There are two states that dictate whether someone will get sick: antiviral state and systemic chronic inflammation. (The Epoch Times)

A study published in Nature Medicine summarizes the causes of chronic inflammation and its consequences. Some of the most common factors are physical inactivity, obesity, a poor diet, social isolation, psychological stress, and poor sleep.



Causes of systemic chronic inflammation resulting in severe COVID symptoms. (The Epoch Times)

Positive Thinking Promotes Antiviral Immunity

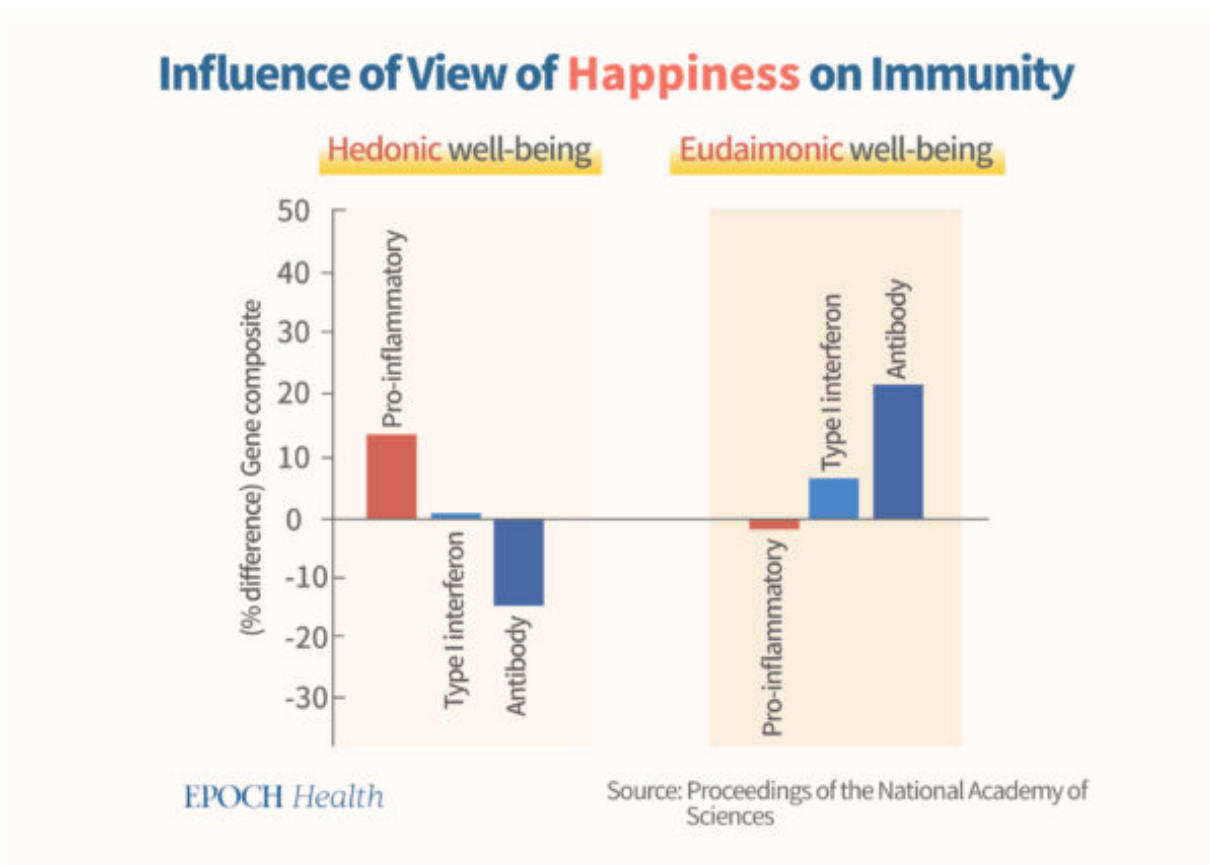
When we talk about strengthening immunity, people often think about improving nutrition or developing antibodies.

Those factors are important; boosting nutrition and adding exercise to one's regimen will certainly help. At the same time, there are other internal ways to enhance our ability to fight viruses.

Everyone has emotions, thoughts, characteristics, and different mental states. People think that our thoughts are intangible, but they do, in fact, have material effects. Science has proved this point already. Depression, anxiety, stress, anger, and fear all have widespread and well-documented physiological effects. They can affect essential aspects of our biochemistry, from hormone production, to our perception of pain. Positive emotions also have an effect, though it can be mixed.

In psychology, there are two broad concepts of happiness: hedonic and eudaimonic. Hedonic refers to the happiness gained through a pleasurable experience such as eating a tasty meal. Eudaimonic refers to happiness that comes from achieving purpose and meaning, such as raising a child. Hedonic happiness is often fleeting and may leave us pursuing more of the stimulus that caused it, such as tasty foods, or indulgences such as watching movies or drinking alcohol. Eudaimonic happiness is often more lasting because it's derived from more substantial experiences or aspects of our own character.

A [2013 study](#) published in PNAS, a top-ranked journal, discovered that people who were inclined to pursue justice and noble goals (eudaimonic) had higher interferon gene expression, higher ability to produce antibodies, and significantly lower expression of chronic inflammatory genes.

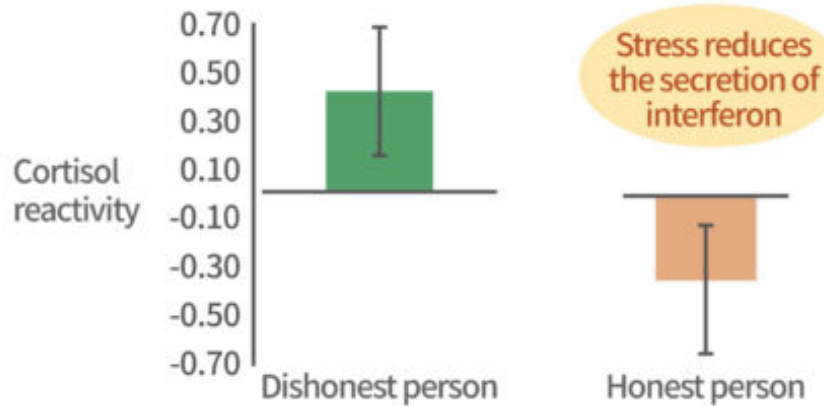


The impact of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being on immunity. (The Epoch Times)

Furthermore, according to a Harvard University and the University of California–Berkeley [study published](#) in Current Opinion in Psychology in 2015, people with honest hearts are less prone to viral infections. That's because the cortisol responsiveness of liars is significantly higher than that of truth-tellers. And the higher the cortisol responsiveness, the easier it is for the stress hormone levels in the body to rise.

Corticosteroids and cortisol have an inhibitory effect on immune cells and [suppress the body's ability to fight viruses](#). Therefore, dishonest behavior will lead to a decline in antiviral ability.

Honesty Decreases Stress and Strengthens Immunity



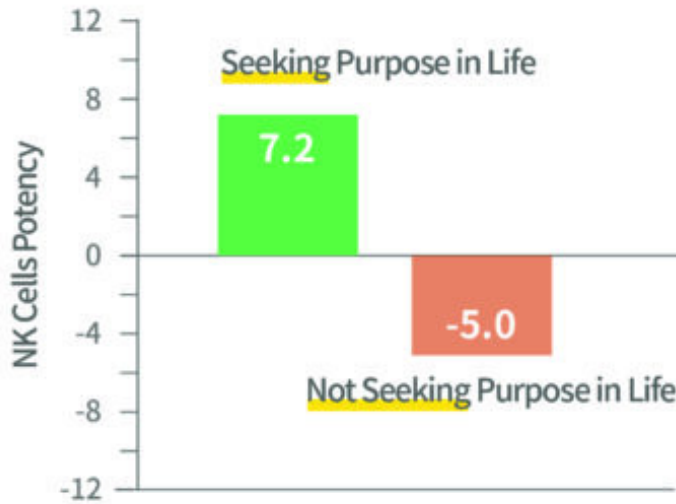
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Source: University of California Berkeley, MIT

Honesty decreases stress and strengthens immunity. (The Epoch Times)

Additionally, research has found that people who seek purpose in life have [stronger natural killer cell function and immunity](#).

Seeking Purpose in Life Strengthens Immune System



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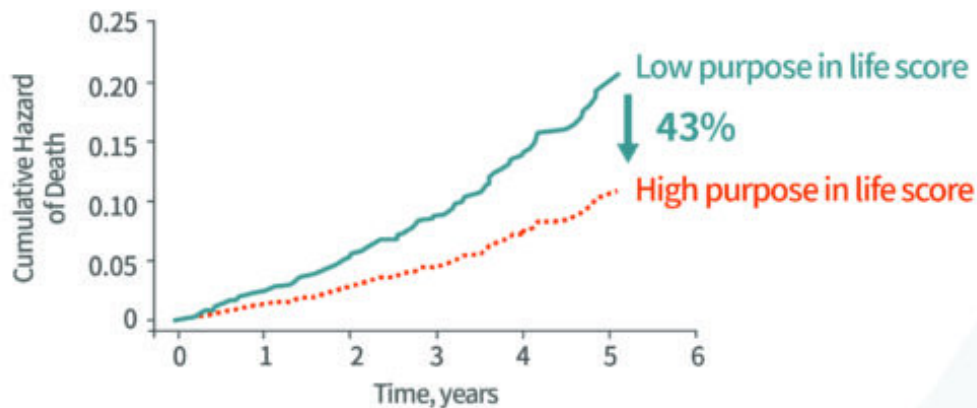
Source: Annals of Behavioral Medicine

Seeking purpose in life strengthens the immune system. (The Epoch Times)

A study was conducted by the Rush Alzheimer’s Disease Center in the Departments of Behavioral Sciences and Neurological Sciences at the Rush University Medical Center in Chicago on the important determinant of health outcomes and mortality in community-dwelling elderly persons in the United States.

Researchers found that having a stronger sense of purpose in life effectively prevents lethal events. A person with a high score on the purpose in life measure had a 43 percent reduced risk of mortality compared to a person with a low score. Thus, developing and refining people’s sense of purpose can protect health and potentially save lives.

Establishing a Life Goal Reduces Risk of Death



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Source: Archives of General Psychiatry

Establishing a life goal reduces the risk of death. (The Epoch Times)

The scientific evidence supports that our thoughts, mindsets, and moral standards can affect the genes and functions of immune cells, affect hormone levels, and impact holistic antiviral immunity.

As a whole, our thoughts can contribute to whether or not we are infected in an epidemic, or whether or not we will be seriously ill after we are infected.

In traditional cultures, people who are kind, altruistic, honest, and have a calm heart and humble attitude are normally healthier. Now we understand that it's because they produce high levels of interferon, strong NK cell function, and strong antiviral immunity. Such people are less susceptible to viral infections.

People with these qualities usually have a stable mind and better mental health and don't easily become anxious, depressed, or have negative and intense emotions.

I have a friend who has faith, is kind, often volunteers to help others, and has been in the COVID ward every day throughout the pandemic. This friend has never been infected with COVID-19. I also have many other friends similar to her who have remained uninfected during the pandemic, too.

Throughout the recent COVID surge in China, there have been an **unusual number** of high-profile Chinese officials **who have died** of suspected COVID-19 infections. As high-ranking officials in China, they enjoy state-of-the-art medical care and have first-class food, nutrients, and dietary supplements. So why have they been dying during this wave?

We all know about the fake news and deceitful propaganda in China, including the cover-up and concealment of COVID-19 data, the suppression of whistleblowers, and the suppression of people who dare to speak the truth.

The high-ranking officials in China—not all, but many of them—didn't share the truth with people. They either executed the cover-up or helped with the cover-up. From a biological perspective, their bodies' stress hormone levels may be much higher than people who don't bear the stress of dishonesty. If they lived in that state constantly, the chronically elevated stress hormones would have done great damage to their immunity.

These officials don't put the well-being of the Chinese people before profits or power. Therefore, the interferon gene expression level of their immune cells is expected to be lower than that of people who care for others.

If these officials were to have had more virtuous minds and kinder hearts, they might have been less prone to viral infections or at risk for severe disease.

There is a Chinese traditional saying: "Illnesses are caused by 70 percent mental and 30 percent physical." During the pandemic, it's not only important to keep a good physical state, but to also keep a kind and virtuous mindset to aid your immune system.

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