

Mushroom Immune Broth

Mushrooms are known for their immune-boosting potency and deep umami flavor. Enjoy this deeply satisfying broth on its own as a booster, or use it as the base for other dishes.

MAKES 4 CUPS (1 L)

• 1-quart (1 L) canning jar

1	leek	1
1	carrot	1
8 oz	button or cremini mushrooms,	250 g trimmed
1 tbsp	avocado oil	15 mL
1 tsp	grated gingerroot	5 mL
1 tsp	salt, or to taste	5 mL

1. Place shiitake mushrooms in jar. Pour in enough warm water to fill. Seal with lid and let stand, shaking once or twice, for at least 8 hours or up to 24 hours.
2. Using a slotted spoon, transfer shiitake mushrooms to a medium bowl (try to avoid swirling soaking liquid). Using kitchen scissors, trim off and discard stems and cut shiitake caps into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch (3 mm) thick slices. Slowly pour soaking liquid from jar into a small bowl, discarding the last $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL) or so of liquid with its sediment. Set aside.
3. Trim roots and dark green leaves off leek and discard. Cut leek into 2-inch (5 cm) long pieces, then thinly slice pieces lengthwise. Rinse very well in 2 changes of water to remove grit. Drain well. Peel carrot and cut into matchsticks.

Cut button mushrooms into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch (3 mm) thick slices.

4. In a medium saucepan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add shiitake caps, leek, carrots, button mushrooms, ginger and salt; cook, stirring, until leeks are browned and limp, about 10 minutes.
5. Stir in reserved mushroom soaking liquid and bring to a simmer over medium heat, skimming off any foam. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 30 minutes or until leek and carrot are very tender. Taste and season to taste with more salt, if desired.
6. Strain broth through a fine-mesh sieve into a large bowl. Discard solids. Use immediately or transfer to airtight containers, let cool and refrigerate for up to 5 days.

Variation

For a different taste and effect, substitute oyster mushrooms for the button mushrooms. They taste much like maitake mushrooms but they're much less expensive! Oyster mushrooms are sweet and slightly warm. Taken with hato mugi (you can add $\frac{1}{3}$ oz/10 g to this soup), they drain away dampness and are said to help with painful joints.

Health Tip: Drink this broth weekly during times when you feel your immune system is under stress, such as during cold and flu or allergy season.