



Prevention and Management of Colds and Flu

Dress

- Wear a scarf, hat and coat to ensure that your throat, head and lower back are covered and warm.
- Wear thick cotton or wool socks.
- If you have a tendency to feel cold wear long-underwear or tights.

Hygiene

- Wash your hands with soap and water throughout the day.
- Be sure to wash your hands before and after preparing food and after using the washroom.
- Practise good body and oral hygiene on a daily basis.
- Take extra precautions if you or someone around you has the flu or a cold.

Food

- “Keep the temperature of your food opposite to the temperature outside”
- Start with a warm breakfast like oatmeal or any warm cereal.
- Choose soups, stews, casseroles and baked dishes. These dishes are easier to digest and help keep the body warm.
- Increase your use of onions, garlic, ginger, thyme, oregano, sage and other warming spices. Spices contain anti-viral and anti-bacterial properties that help fight off infections.
- Have at least 2 – 3 cups of vegetables a day. Choose a mix of root vegetables (potatoes, yams, carrots, leeks, turnip, beets, etc) and greens (kale, spinach, broccoli etc). The body needs adequate vegetables daily to build and maintain a healthy immune system.
- Avoid cold, raw food. Cold and raw food take more energy to digest and can cool the body down. If you are always hot, regardless of season, this is less important for you.
- Limit your fruit to two a day. Fruit has natural sugars, that, if taken in excess, can “feed” an infection.
- Save your juicing and smoothies for the warmer weather. These drinks are cooling to the body.
- Avoid sugar, caffeine, alcohol, fried and processed food. These foods have minimal nutrients and suppress the immune system.
- Avoid dairy, especially if you have a tendency to get sinus infections, as it promotes mucous and congestion when you get sick.

Water

- Consume ½ your body weight in ounces a day. Your body needs water for all body functions and to eliminate toxins.
- Choose room temperature or warm water. Cold water can cool the body down too much.



Sleep and Relaxation

- Avoid getting run down and exhausted. An exhausted system is more susceptible to colds and flus.
- Get adequate sleep, usually 6 -8 hours a night. The body repairs and heals when you sleep. If you are sleep deprived the body will not heal properly.

Stress Management

- Reduce your stress. Chronic stress is one of the main factors for susceptibility to infection as stress depletes the immune system.
- Find outlets for your stress. Exercise is often very helpful. Look into meditation, relaxation exercises, journaling, reading etc.
- Practise breathing exercises regularly. The respiratory system is full of immune supporting cells that protect the body from inhaled allergens and toxins.

Exercise

- Do regular, moderate exercise. Exercise decreases stress and boosts the immune system.
- Avoid heavy, exhaustive exercise. Heavy exercise can depress the immune system.
- If exercising outside, stay warm. You are better to sweat because you are dressed warmly than you are to have too much skin exposed and get cold. If you are playing / exercising outside and you do sweat, change into dry warm clothes as soon as you finish.

At the first sign of a cold or flu

- Improve on any of the above recommendations that you have been slack on.
- Rest. Rest the body and the mind.
- The best thing to eat is chicken soup or a broth soup.
- Do warming socks. Take two pairs of cotton or wool socks. Take one pair and soak them in cold water. Put them on. Take the second dry pair and put them on top of the cold socks. Go to bed, or wrap up warmly on the couch. Warming socks are wonderful at clearing congestion from the head and boosting the immune system.
- Encourage a fever. A fever is the way that the body fights infection. Wrap up warmly with a lot of blankets and help the body create a fever.

Supplements

The following supplements are typically beneficial to have handy over the cold/flu season:

- Probiotics
- Vitamin D
- Vitamin C
- Herbal supplements such as IM-Matrix, Echinacea, Astragalus Combo, or Deep Immune
- Homeopathics such as Oscillocoquinum or Pascoleucyn
- Oil of Oregano
- Alkaline salts
- Lymphatic Cream



Naturopathic Foundations

Talk to your naturopathic doctor about natural alternatives to the flu shot.