

OurHealthNews

Making Health Affordable
Together

NOTES FROM THE KAT

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Meow,

Quick Review on Colds, Flus and Tips on Staying Healthy This Flu Season

Those nasty, cold and flu bugs are quite fond of humans this time of year. So what's the difference when it comes to a cold or flu?

Flu - the flu is characterized by a rapid onset of infection in the bronchial tubes and lungs, and it causes humans to feel awful all over. Other symptoms include a cough, exhaustion, headache, and fever. The flu is far more contagious than the common cold, since it can spread from person to person through the air.

Colds - a cold comes on more slowly than the flu and affects primarily the head and throat with mild to moderate cough, sneezing, a stuffy nose, and swollen sinuses. Colds rarely come with the fever and achy feelings associated with the flu. The cold virus is spread primarily through physical contact of some kind, which can include touching things like doorknobs used by sick people (alas)!

Fast fact: Both the flu and colds are viral infections - thus antibiotics are *not* useful as treatment.

The flu is far more dangerous than a cold and accounts for an average of 36,000 deaths annually, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Flu shots are one way of protecting yourself from the flu, though this year (again), it may be tough to get a shot due shortages in supplies.

So practice a few of these cold/flu tips to stay healthy this season:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. If you get sick, stay home for the contagious first days to protect others from getting sick.
- Cover your nose and mouth with tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Keep your hands clean.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoid high levels of stress which can double the rate of an infection compared with those with lower stress!
- Get enough rest.
- Continue to be physically active to keep your immune system humming.
- Eat a balanced diet of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats to ensure plenty of vitamins and minerals. Remember that sugar is bad for certain immune cells called neutrophils and slows down these friendly warriors' ability to engulf and gobble up viruses.
- Keep hydrated but avoid soda, coffee, and other caffeinated beverages, which can dry out the human body.



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8. [Joint Complex](#)
9. [Beta Sitosterol](#)
10. [Vitamin C](#)

Member Spotlight



"I've been using the Co-op's [Evening Primrose Oil](#) for a couple of years now, ever since I read it helped with those dreadful occurrences that come with menopause: hot flashes, night sweats, etc. Using that, along with your [Menopause Formula](#), I seem to have those demons at bay. Coincidentally, I just read in Louise Gittleman's "Fat Flush Plan" that evening primrose oil is useful as part of a regimen to cleanse and support liver function. Meow!" D.H.

Tell-A-Friend



Please ["Tell a Friend"](#)!

If your friends and family care about supplement quality *and* love a good deal, they will certainly thank you! ^..^



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Natural Cold and Flu Crushers

In addition to tips above, adding certain dietary vitamins and supplements to your daily regimen may also help to ward off infections by boosting your immune system.

Here are just a few suggestions:

Vitamin C

Remember our good old friend, Linus Pauling? Back in 1970, Pauling wrote the book on everyone's favorite anti-flu vitamin, vitamin C.

Since 1970, there have been over twenty studies that showed that vitamin C was effective in reducing the severity of flu symptoms. (For example, [one study](#) shows that vitamin C boosts immune system in as little as 5 hours)

[Vitamin C](#) is a proven anti-inflammatory, collagen-building nutrient, which helps to get your respiratory system back in gear. A strong respiratory tract is your first defense against flu viruses. Vitamin C also has the added benefit of increasing the effects of friendly phagocytes, which "eat" viral cells.

Studies show you should take at least 2,000 mg per day, because your body can absorb and utilize much more vitamin C when you are sick.

Vitamin E

[Vitamin E](#) is an antioxidant that strengthens the immune system. Nuts, sweet potatoes, and avocados all contain vitamin E. However, most foods generally contain only small amounts of vitamin E. It is good to take a vitamin E supplement to ensure you get the optimum dose of 400 IU.

The [Journal of American Medical Association](#) published a study of older adults that took a vitamin E supplement everyday had fewer colds than those who didn't receive the supplement.

B Vitamins

The [entire family of B vitamins](#) is also crucial for efficient immune system defense. They are used by the human body to produce immune system components like T-cells and anti-bodies.

In particular, pantothenic acid (vitamin B5) is noted for promoting antibody production and for supporting function of the adrenal glands, the health of which is so important in stress management. Some good dietary sources of this nutrient include eggs, milk, potatoes, whole wheat, peas, beans, and fresh vegetables.

There is some evidence that extra vitamin B6 can give "older" immune systems a boost. In a study at Tufts University, a dosage of 50 milligrams a day hiked immune response to levels associated with much younger adults.

Melatonin

As people age, there is decline in the immune system function. According to Dr. Walter Pierpaoli and Dr. William Regelson in their book *The Melatonin Miracle*, melatonin can keep the immune system working at peak capacity.

Their studies found that melatonin:

- Strengthens antibody response to attack invading organisms such as viruses and bacteria
- Increases activity of the thymus and thyroid gland producing more T cell lymphocytes (good immune fighters!)

[Melatonin](#) is produced naturally by the human body and usually peaks at night, during sleep. That's part of why you need to rest when you are fighting the cold or flu!

[Melatonin is also considered a potent antioxidant](#) and is thought to be 6-10 times more active than vitamin E as an oxygen free radical scavenger.

Selenium

Selenium is best known as an antioxidant and catalyst for the production of active thyroid hormone, and it also supports healthy moods. Nutritional deficiencies of selenium have long been associated with reduced immune system responses and susceptibility to infectious diseases.

However, recent research has demonstrated that oxidative stress in the body (specifically, deficiency of selenium) can actually lead to mutations of viral pathogens, creating more contagious and life-threatening viruses.

It's not merely coincidental that many of the most virulent viruses originate in Asia, where soils and diets are highly deficient in selenium. With insufficient selenium available, viruses found in livestock and birds are able to jump to human hosts and mutate into more punishing forms. Think of the avian flu for reference.

Generally 100-200 micrograms per day of selenium can help to ensure optimal resistance to typical cold and flu viruses.

There are plenty of other vitamins, herbs, nutrients to try during the cold and flu season such as vitamin A, zinc, coenzyme-Q10, garlic and echinacea, to name a few. [Click here](#) to link to the latest thinking on diet and immunity.

Health in the News

- [Glucosamine may help multiple sclerosis patients](#)
- [Vitamin C, arginine, and zinc heal bed sores](#)
- [Exercise can decrease aging in men](#)

That's all for now! Don't forget to "[spread the word](#)" about our big 15% off Cold and Flu Sale to your friends!

^..^

Still purringly yours,

Guido

Guido Housemouser
Chief Kat and Community Manager
Our Health Co-op

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