

How to Keep Healthy During Flu Season by Dr. Sandra Olic

Rest. Adequate sleep is essential for a strong immune system. People are often more susceptible to infections when they are run down.

Avoid sugar. Sugar stresses the immune system.

Eat nutritious foods. Fruits and vegetables are high in antioxidants including Vitamins A and C. Adequate protein intake is also important for immune function. It is important when you are ill to not overeat. Your body needs the energy to fight infection rather than digest excess food. **Hot soups and teas** are not only nourishing when you are ill but they raise body temperature, which can kill off viruses. Garlic is a natural antibiotic and can be used liberally. Try making a tea made from garlic cloves and ginger.

At the first signs of illness take an immune supplement that includes **Vitamin C** or take 2000mg of Vitamin C 3 times daily for a few days. **Vitamin D** has been the subject of the latest research on immune function. 5,000 iu daily for a week can be taken. It is a good idea to have your Vitamin D3 levels checked and supplement appropriately. People with adequate Vitamin D levels were found to suffer less viral infections than those with suboptimal levels. I have found many patients to be low in this vitamin, even in sunny Arizona. Under ideal conditions our bodies make Vitamin D from sunshine.

A quality herbal formula including **Echinacea and Goldenseal** can also be very helpful. At the first sign of illness 1 dropperful 3 times daily for a few days can prevent a full blown infection and shorten duration.

A **salt water gargle** several times a day can help relieve a sore throat.

Wet sock therapy is a wonderful naturopathic remedy that increases circulation and relieves congestion. Before bed, take a hot shower or bath. Put light cotton wet socks in cold water, wring them out and place in the refrigerator for 5 minutes. Place them on your feet and cover with thicker cotton or wool socks. Your body will warm the socks while you sleep.

Nutrient intravenous vitamin therapy can stop a cold or flu in its tracks. Higher levels of vitamins are able to be given, as it bypasses the digestive tract and it has been shown to increase healing by 70%. This can be done in a physician's office that offers this therapy.

Illness is often a sign that we need to slow down. Take the opportunity to rest and nurture yourself while you are ill. You deserve it!

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**This article should not replace medical care and you should always consult your healthcare provider*