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Supporting the Body During “Cold and Flu Season”

Introduction

Every year, when sunlight diminishes, temperatures drop, and people spend more time indoors, those who aren't proactively protecting their immune systems run the risk of getting sick. Whether it's a throbbing headache or a bad case of the sniffles, the common cold can keep you from doing your day-to-day tasks effectively.

You are exposed to bacteria and viruses wherever you go, so it is important to take proper measures to keep your body as healthy as possible.

Get Plenty of Vitamins C & D

Vitamin C is commonly found in fruits and vegetables, especially citrus, and it has been used to support the immune system for decades. Even if you're beginning to feel sick, vitamin C can still be beneficial, as many people report that it has helped shorten the length of their illness. Oranges, grapefruit, or even over-the-counter vitamin C supplements can provide you with the antioxidants you need to fight off an impending cold.

Sunshine is also an important influencer on wellness—and the human body loves the vitamin D that is made from sunlight. Vitamin D is known as an “immune system modulator,” which means it helps combat infections and ensures your immune system stays in top condition. In fact, some studies have shown that people who have higher vitamin D levels are less susceptible to the cold and flu. In the winter, when the sun doesn't shine as often, you might run low on vitamin D—which puts your body at risk. To offset the lack of natural sunlight, consider taking a vitamin D3 supplement.

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Stock Up on Quality Supplements

Vitamins, whether from food or taken as a dietary supplement, aren't the only support that can help you fight the common cold. There are also plenty of herbs and other measures you can take to build up your body in preparation for the winter months. These are a few of the most popular:

Probiotics

When people hear the word “bacteria,” they often think of germs and diseases—but probiotics promote a healthy gut. Good bacteria in your digestive tract can actually help your body fight viruses before they inflame your immune system. You can ensure that you're consuming enough probiotics by eating yogurt and other fermented foods, or you can take high-quality supplements. Taking prebiotics or eating foods high in fiber will also help probiotics to flourish.¹

Echinacea

Echinacea is a plant that has been used for centuries to help avoid illness during cold and flu season. The extract of the plant can be taken in liquid or pill form, and experts recommend taking it three times daily to give your body the best amount. Similar to vitamin C, echinacea is also useful even after cold symptoms arise because it can reduce the length of the illness.

Elderberry

Also known as elderflower, elderberry has been shown to aid the immune system and fight upper respiratory infections. People who take elderberry supplements report having shorter experiences with cold and flu symptoms than those who don't. Elderberry may also reduce mucus production, which can be beneficial for those who are fighting a cold. Just as with echinacea, wellness experts recommend taking elderberry three times per day to support the body.

Whether you're using supplements daily or keeping them on hand just in case, adding these to your wellness toolkit can prove valuable if your household is exposed to illness.

Resting supports the natural healing process, so when you're having trouble sleeping, take proactive steps to help your body relax.

Stay Rested

Our minds and bodies do their best, most reparative work while we're asleep. Rest is restorative—which means adequate sleep is an important part of strengthening the immune system. When we're asleep, our bodies can detox and fight off potential infections, but running on insufficient sleep can weaken that process. Try to get at least seven hours of sleep per night to make sure your immune system is functioning at its best.

Resting supports the natural healing process, so when you're having trouble sleeping, take proactive steps to help your body relax. If you need a little help getting started, [check out the eBook we wrote](#) on some great tips for getting a good night of sleep.

Practice Good Hygiene

Even if you take supplements and get plenty of rest, you still can't control the actions of others—which is why practicing good hygiene, especially in public spaces, is key to maintaining your wellness. Washing your hands thoroughly with soap and water helps kill bacteria that you might have come in contact with. Experts say (at least) 20 seconds is the amount of time it takes to clean hands effectively—and don't forget between your fingers and under your nails.

After you wash your hands, drying them is just as important. Viruses are more likely to spread on wet surfaces, so ensuring your hands are dry adds an extra layer of protection against potential illness. Additionally, try to keep your hands away from your eyes, nose, and mouth. Cold viruses can live on the hands for up to 24 hours, so if you have to touch your face for some reason, be sure to wash—and dry—your hands.

Conclusion

Getting sick might seem inevitable, especially with something as common as a cold—but even if you do catch a bug, you can still take steps to lessen your symptoms and the effects of the illness.

When “cold and flu season” arrives, it's important to be prepared. At Trinity School of Natural Health, we want to help you make the best decisions for your mind and body, which is why we offer programs to educate you on proven practices in natural wellness. [Learn about the enrollment opportunities](#) that will be a good fit for you.

REFERENCES

1. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/323490#benefits-and-side-effects-of-probiotics>



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