

December
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Medically-Based Fitness



Natural Strategies for Cold and Flu Prevention

There are no known cures for colds and flu, so cold and flu prevention should be your goal. A proactive approach to warding off colds and flu is apt to make your whole life healthier. The most effective way for preventing the flu is to get the flu shot. It may not be natural, but it works better than anything else. But there are other strategies you can employ as well.

Wash Your Hands

Most cold and flu viruses are spread by direct contact. Someone who has the flu sneezes onto their hand, and then touches the telephone, the keyboard, a kitchen glass. The germs can live for hours -- in some cases weeks -- only to be picked up by the next person who touches the same object. So wash your hands often. If no sink is available, rub your hands together very hard for a minute or so. That also helps break up most of the cold germs. Or rub an alcohol-based hand sanitizer onto your hands.

Don't Cover Your Sneezes or Coughs with Your Hands

Because germs and viruses cling to your bare hands, muffling coughs and sneezes with your hands results in passing along your germs to others. When you feel a sneeze or cough coming, use a tissue, then throw it away immediately. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow.

Don't Touch Your Face

Cold and flu viruses enter your body through the eyes, nose, or mouth. Touching their faces is the major way children catch colds, and a key way they pass colds on to their parents.

Drink Plenty of Fluids

Water flushes your system, washing out the poisons as it rehydrates you. A typical, healthy adult needs eight 8-ounce glasses of fluids each day. How can you tell if you're getting enough liquid? If the color of your urine runs close to clear, you're getting enough. If it's deep yellow, you need more fluids.

Exercise Regularly

Aerobic exercise speeds up the heart to pump larger quantities of blood; makes you breathe faster to help transfer oxygen from your lungs to your blood; and makes you sweat once your body heats up. These exercises help increase the body's natural virus-killing cells.

Relax

If you can teach yourself to relax, you can activate your immune system on demand. There's evidence that when you put your relaxation skills into action, your interleukins -- leaders in the immune system response against cold and flu viruses -- increase in the bloodstream. Train yourself to picture an image you find pleasant or calming. Do this 30 minutes a day for several months. Keep in mind, relaxation is a learnable skill, but it is *not* doing nothing. People who try to relax, but are in fact bored, show no changes in blood chemicals.

<http://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/cold-guide/11-tips-prevent-cold-flu?page=2>

Upcoming Events

Golden West Lecture

There will not be a talk this month due to the Holidays. Check back soon for information regarding the January talk!

Weight Maintenance Program

Continue your hard work to maintain your weight through the remainder of the year! That first week of January and final weigh in is just around the corner!



What is the right way to wash your hands?

1. Wet Hands and apply soap.
2. Rub your hands together creating lather and make sure to get the backs of your hands, between fingers and under your nails.
3. Continue rubbing your hands for 20 seconds. Consider humming the Happy Birthday song as a timer.
4. Rinse hands well.
5. Dry hands using a towel or air dry them.

Source: Centers for Disease Control

Healthy New Year's Resolution Ideas

1. Control Your Portions:

Start downsizing your dishes. Studies show using smaller plates and bowls promote weight loss because they help to curb overeating.

2. Be Active:

One habit naturally slim people share is their ability to stay in motion. Try to inject each day with more activity (adults should aim for 30 minutes daily). The opportunities are endless once you've developed the right mindset.

3. Slash Sodium Consumption:

Studies show many Americans consume close to twice the recommended limit of sodium, which is a teaspoon (or 6 grams) daily. Besides contributing to water retention (think bloat!), sodium can raise blood pressure. Processed foods contain the most, so make sure to read labels. Lower sodium diets are linked to decreased risk of heart disease, but are also associated with lower hypertension and weight management.

4. Increase Antioxidants:

When your body breaks down food it produces molecules called free radicals. Cigarette smoke and radiation also produce free radicals. Over time, the damage from these substances can result in conditions like infection, cancer, inflammation, and heart disease. That's where antioxidants step in. How the American Dietetic Association sums up their role: Once you cut an apple, it begins to brown, but if you dip it in orange juice, which contains vitamin C (an antioxidant), it stays white. You can defend your body the same way by including rich sources in your diet. Pomegranates, coffee, and even chocolate contain antioxidants.

5. Quit Smoking:

For Smokers, quitting may be the

hardest resolution to stick with because it is so challenging. If you consider the benefits, and take advantage of today's resources, this could be the year you successfully become a nonsmoker. The National Cancer Institute's [smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov) website is a good resource to bookmark.



6. Floss Your Teeth:

Like many people, you may not know that bacteria in your mouth can lead to serious problems if you neglect oral health. You may also be surprised to learn that during routine exams, your dentist can spot indications of diabetes and heart disease. One simple thing you can do to head off bacteria is floss your teeth.

7. Wear Sunscreen Year-Round: Sun exposure affects everyone. According to the National Cancer Institute most skin cancer develops after age 50, though sun damage starts at an early age. The sun's rays are also behind brown spots, and can make wrinkles appear before their time. Wear a broad spectrum sunscreen, even in the winter, anywhere skin is laid bare to the elements.

8. Expect Good Things from Yourself: Having healthy expectations for yourself is important to both your physical and mental health. Obviously, that's easier said than done. A mean-spirited inner-critic can ruin relationships, keep you from reaching personal goals, and cramp your ability to be an active participant in *your* life.

<http://www.rd.com/slideshows/9-healthy-new-years-resolutions/?v=all>

MBF's Adrienne Rosel in Boulder Community Hospital Foundation Fashion Show & Fundraiser



MBF Marketing Director, Adrienne Rosel, was featured as one of the models for the November 2011 Fashion Show and Fundraiser. All proceeds benefit the expansion of Foothills Hospital in Boulder County.



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Start thinking about your New Year's Resolution today!

Is it to lose weight? Is it to walk longer on the treadmill? Write it down and make it happen!