



Wellness Committee

Mindful Moment

Newsletter

Flu & Allergy Season: Stay Strong, Stay Well

Our September wellness newsletter dives into Flu/Allergy season with prevention must-do's, holistic approach, and easy relief you can use on shift. Tap in and breathe easier this fall!



Floridaapco.org

I'M NOT FEELING SO HOT. IS THERE SOMETHING THAT I COULD BE COMING DOWN WITH?

The flu and the cold are both caused by a virus and an infection that can give you a fever. They both have similar symptoms but the main difference is how bad the symptoms present themselves and how long they are lasting for.

Flu symptoms begin suddenly and are typically severe and can last 1-2 weeks. Cold symptoms are milder and can last for a week or longer.

If you have the cold or flu, most likely you won't need to see a doctor. Stay home! Don't bring your virus to work, school, or other public place. Drink fluids and get plenty of rest. It can also benefit you to get a flu shot each year ~ often covered by insurance!

Home remedies can help reduce symptoms which will help you to be more comfortable and rest easier which is going to have a big impact in your recovery.

What are the symptoms I should be looking out for?

If you have a common flu, you could experience:

- Fever
- Chills
- Headache
- Body ache
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Sore throat
- Dry cough
- Tiredness and fatigue

If you get the stomach flu, you may experience:

- Chills
- Fever
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Stomach Cramps
- Diarrhea

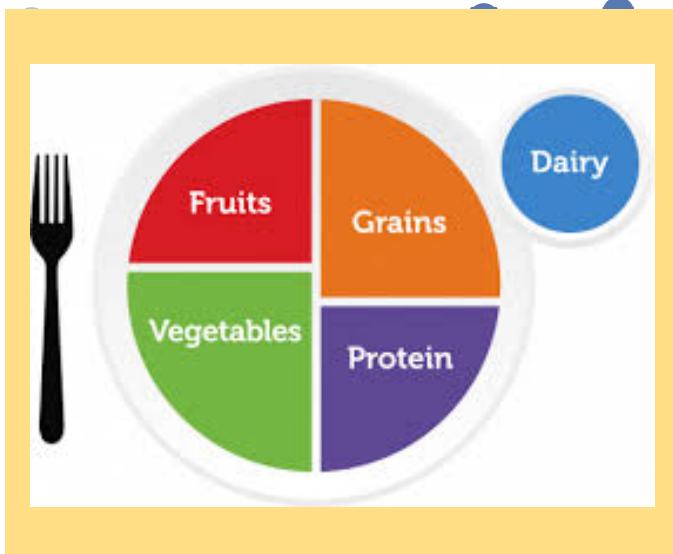


HEALTHY LIFESTYLES CAN HELP DIMINISH COLD/FLU SYMPTOMS AND STRENGTHEN OUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

According to the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), it is recommended to follow these six habits to help ease and remedy the symptoms of a cold or flu.

- Eat nutritious food that includes fruits, vegetables, lean protein, whole wheat, and low fat or 2% milk products. This will increase your chance of getting a variety of nutrients and have optimal immune function. The FDA recommends the healthy plate from myplate.gov Healthline's article 'The Secrets to Never Getting Sick' recommends vitamin A and vitamin D consumption to help prevent the risk for infection. Vitamin A rich foods include sweet potatoes, mangos, and eggs while vitamin D rich foods include yogurt, fish and mushrooms. Consult with a healthcare provider to confirm the necessity of nutritional supplements with food intake.
- Maintain physical activity to keep a healthy weight, which will lower your chances of dying from flu or pneumonia. By maintaining a healthy weight, you can get adequate sleep, reduce stress, and monitor your caloric intake. Obesity may also lower effectiveness of vaccines for numerous diseases.
- Get enough sleep. The CDC recommends the average adult get 7 hours of sleep a night. Healthline's article 'The Secrets to Never Getting Sick' states that the body releases cytokines during extended periods of sleep and these proteins fight infection which in turn will regulate the immune system.
- Quit smoking to give your body a chance to fight autoimmune diseases.
- Avoid excessive alcohol to maintain a strengthened immune system.

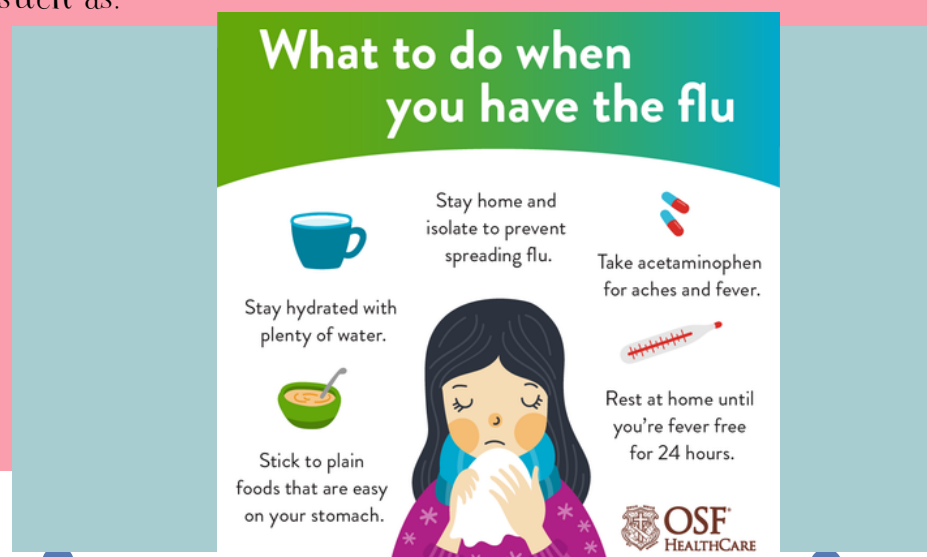
Age Group	Age	Sleep Recommended Daily
Newborn	0-3 months	14-17 hours (including naps)
Infant	4-12 months	12-16 hours (including naps)
Toddler	1-2 years	11-14 hours (including naps)
Preschool	3-5 years	10-13 hours (including naps)
School Age	6-12 years	9-12 hours
Teen	13-17 years	8-10 hours
Adult	18-60 years	7 or more hours
Adult	61-64 years	7-9 hours
Adult	65 years and older	7-8 hours



NOT THE MEDICINE TYPE? THESE 10 NATURAL REMEDIES CAN HELP WITH FLU SYMPTOMS

The flu - also known as influenza - is caused by a virus. There is no cure for the flu, but we are going to explore some natural ways we can relieve the symptoms.

- Drink Water and Fluids
 - Drinking water is even more important when you have the flu. It helps to keep your nose, mouth, and throat moist, aiding in getting rid of mucus.
 - You can also get dehydrated if you are not drinking normally. If you are not getting enough water, diarrhea and fever can present more severely.
 - You will know if you are drinking enough water when you have to urinate regularly and the color of your urine is clear or pale yellow. If it is not one of these colors, you are most likely dehydrated.
- Get Plenty of Rest
 - Sleeping can help to boost your immune system and get you back on your feet.
- Drink Warm Broth
 - Chicken or bone broth is another good way to stay hydrated and loosen up nose and sinus congestion.
 - It is naturally high in protein and minerals like sodium and potassium. These all aid in rebuilding immune cells.
 - You can buy different varieties, but get ones that have low sodium. You can also make your own and freeze portions for future use. (See the instructions to do this below!)
- Up Your Zinc Intake
 - Zinc helps your body to make germ fighting white blood cells. It may also help to ease the symptoms of the flu and shorten the duration of the symptoms. You can get zinc from a supplement or foods such as:
 - Red meat
 - Shellfish
 - Lentils
 - Chickpeas
 - Beans
 - Nuts
 - Seeds
 - Dairy
 - Eggs



MORE NATURAL REMEDIES YOU CAN USE TO EASE YOUR SYMPTOMS

- Rinse with Salt water
 - Boil or heat up water and let it cool until its warm. Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of salt with 8 ounces of water.
 - Put the salt water to the back of your throat and gargle it for 10-30 seconds to rinse your mouth and throat.
 - Spit the water out and repeat 2-4 times.
- Drink herbal tea
 - Several herbs have natural antiviral and antibacterial properties.
 - A hot herbal tea can also alleviate the pain in your throat.
 - Use star anise with one of the following to make a tea:
 - Green or black tea
 - Turmeric
 - Fresh or dried ginger
 - Fresh garlic
 - Cloves
 - Sweeten herbal teas with honey which is also antiviral.
- Apply essential oils
 - Some essential oils can protect you from viruses and bacteria. Tea tree oil is one that can slow down the rate of which a virus multiplies.
 - Different essential oils that you can mix into unscented soaps or lotions include:
 - Cinnamon oil
 - Peppermint oil
 - Eucalyptus oil
 - Geranium oil
 - Lemon oil
 - Thyme oil
 - Oregano oil
- Use a humidifier
 - Flu viruses survive longer in dry indoor air and can make it spread more easily. Colder outdoor temperatures generally lower the humidity as well. Indoor air can get dry from heating and air conditioners, but using a humidifier brings moisture back into the air.
 - Inhale steam from boiled water or a steaming device.



DIFFERENT ALLERGENS CAN PRESENT THEMSELVES AS SYMPTOMS OF COLDS AND THE FLU. ARE THESE PRESENT IN YOUR 911 CENTER?

While 911 dispatchers are often recognized for their critical role in emergency response, the occupational environment in a dispatch center can pose unique health challenges—one of which includes exposure to common allergens. These allergens, often overlooked, can impact dispatcher comfort, concentration, and overall well-being.

Dust and Dust Mites

Dispatch centers typically house numerous electronic devices such as—monitors, radios, servers, and phones—all of which can attract and collect dust. Over time, dust buildup can harbor dust mites, a leading cause of indoor allergies. Symptoms such as sneezing, nasal congestion, and itchy eyes are common and can distract dispatchers during high stress situations.

Fragrance Sensitivities

Many employees use personal care products like colognes, perfumes, scented lotions, or air fresheners in the workplace. While these scents might be pleasant to some, they can trigger allergic reactions or sensitivities in others, including headaches, respiratory issues, or skin irritation. Some dispatch centers have adopted fragrance free policies to mitigate this issue.

Cleaning Chemicals

Dispatch centers are cleaned regularly to maintain hygiene, especially in high-touch areas. However, cleaning agents often contain harsh chemicals like ammonia or bleach that can trigger allergic reactions or asthma symptoms. Inadequate ventilation can worsen this exposure, especially in 24/7 environments where windows are rarely opened.

Mold

Older buildings or areas with poor ventilation can harbor mold, particularly in carpets, ceiling tiles, or HVAC systems. Mold spores are a common allergen that can lead to chronic respiratory problems if not identified and managed properly.

Food Allergens

Shared break rooms and eating areas present a risk for those with food allergies. Cross-contamination or accidental exposure to allergens like peanuts, dairy, or shellfish can be serious, particularly in small, enclosed spaces. This includes the scent of certain foods as well.

Animals

Many emergency communications centers have adopted animals or have therapy dog units as a way to foster positivity in their centers or assist dispatchers after taking tough calls for service. However, those with allergies to cats, dogs, etc, can be triggered when these animals are introduced into the rooms.

Addressing the Issue

To create a healthier workspace, dispatch centers can implement air purifiers, enforce scent-free policies, use hypoallergenic cleaning products, and conduct regular HVAC maintenance. Raising awareness and encouraging employees to report allergy symptoms early can also help prevent long-term health issues.



Honey Bomb

Servings: *Take 1 tbsp in warm water or take 1 tbsp directly 3x a week to prevent colds and boost immunity.*

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp of ginger (Sub organic dried)
- 1 tbsp grated turmeric (sub organic dried)
- 1 tsp grated garlic
- 3 cracks (pinches) of black pepper
- 3 pinches of cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp of ceylon cinnamon

Instructions:

Cover ingredients in raw unfiltered honey in a jar . You can leave in the counter or refrigerator. The longer it sits, the more potent it is.

Disclaimer: Consult your doctor before trying this recipe, especially if you have health conditions or dietary restrictions.



Chicken Broth

Ingredients:

- 1 (4-5 lb.) whole chicken (or 4-5 lbs. of bone-in, skin-on chicken parts)
- 2 large carrots, peeled and cut into thirds
- 3 leafy celery stalks, halved
- 1 onion, halved
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 clove garlic, peeled but left whole
- 5 sprigs fresh parsley
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 5 black peppercorns
- 10 cups cold water, or more as needed
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Instructions:

- Place the chicken in your largest stock pot. Add the carrots, celery, onion, bay leaf, garlic, parsley, thyme and peppercorns. Pour in the cold water and salt, adding more water (if necessary) to cover the chicken. Bring to a boil. Lower the heat; cover the pot (leaving just a small gap to allow some steam to escape). Simmer for 1 ½ hours, skimming the top occasionally.
- Turn off the heat and remove the chicken from the pot. When the chicken is cool enough to handle, remove the meat from the skin and bones. Save the meat to use in a recipe and discard the skin and bones. Strain the contents of the pot through a colander into a large bowl or other pot; discard the solids. Pack the broth in containers and refrigerate for 3-4 days or freeze for up to 6 months.



Bone Broth

Ingredients:

- 4 lb. beef bones, preferably a mix of marrow bones and bones with a little meat on them, such as oxtail, short ribs, or knuckle bones (cut in half by a butcher)
- 2 medium unpeeled carrots, cut into 2" pieces
- 1 medium leek, end trimmed, cut into 2" pieces
- 1 medium onion, quartered
- 1 garlic head, halved crosswise
- 2 celery stalks, cut into 2" pieces
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 Tbsp. black peppercorns
- 1 Tbsp. cider vinegar (optional)

Instructions

Stovetop Method:

Fill a large (at least 6-qt.) stockpot with 12 cups of water (preferably filtered). Add 2 celery stalks, cut into 2" pieces, 2 bay leaves, 2 Tbsp. black peppercorns, and 1 Tbsp. cider vinegar (if using). Scrape the roasted bones and vegetables into the pot along with any juices or browned bits stuck to the pan. Add more water if necessary to cover bones and vegetables. Cover pot with a tight-fitting lid and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a very low simmer and cook with lid slightly ajar, skimming foam and excess fat occasionally, at least 5 but up to 12 hours—the longer you simmer it, the more gelatinous your broth will be. (Do not leave on stovetop unattended.) Add more water as necessary to ensure bones and vegetables are fully submerged.

Instant Pot Method:

Combine 2 celery stalks, cut into 2" pieces, 2 bay leaves, 2 Tbsp. black peppercorns, and 1 Tbsp. cider vinegar (if using) in an Instant Pot. Scrape the roasted bones and vegetables into the Instant Pot along with any juices or browned bits stuck to the pan. Add 12 cups water and, using sauté function, bring liquid to a simmer, spooning off any foam that rises to the surface. Lock lid and cook broth on high pressure for 2 hours; release pressure manually. Remove the pot from the heat and let cool slightly. Strain broth using a fine-mesh sieve and discard bones and vegetables. Cool broth until barely warm, then refrigerate in smaller containers overnight. Remove solidified fat from the top of the chilled broth and discard or reserve for another use.

