

Bryce's Top Ten Flu-Fighter Tips: Sneezes and Boogers and Snoogies, Oh My!

By Bryce Wylde

Whatever you do, avoid the sneezes and sniffles and anything else coming at-chooo this cold and flu season! Washing your hands is a key prevention practice of course, but arming your immune system is equally as powerful.

"Flu", or the influenza-A and -B viruses make their rounds this side of the planet beginning November through to April and affect 10-25% of Canadians annually. Unfortunately, this infectious disease sends 20,000 to hospitals and sadly it kills up to 8,000 people every year – most of whom are immune-compromised.

If you want to learn whether flu is particularly rampant in your neck of the woods, Google has found that certain search terms are good indicators of flu activity. Google Flu Trends uses aggregated Google search data to estimate flu activity. Visit their site here: <http://www.google.org/flutrends/ca/#CA>

As a tribute to the David Letterman Show, here is my Top 10 flu-fighter tips to reduce your chances of getting the bug this year.

10) The Germ Barrier

Your eyes and nose are lined with a mucous membrane that cold and flu viruses use as a front door entry to infect you. When they're dry, your immune army (in charge of protecting that front door) aren't alert and the welcome mat is left out. One common example would be just before boarding a plane or a dry and enclosed office space. The solution: use a Q-Tip to apply petroleum jelly up your nose and voila, you've got an enhanced germ barrier!

9) Sanitize your hands after you touch, well... anything!

Keep an all-natural hand sanitizer that promises to kill 99.9% of germs in your pocket at all times. For this solution to work, all you need to do is actually use it!

8) Beat the boogers and snoogies

You often can't see them but they're on door handles and just about everywhere else kids touch. Kids will be kids. And they're also snotty, sometimes bratty, and often primary germ carriers. You can try and prevent their snoogies from infecting you but inevitably they themselves will fall ill this cold and flu season. That's okay! That is how their immune systems mature. Always seek guidance from their pediatrician or family doctor when necessary, but avoid over the counter products containing dextromethorphan and guaifenesin as they are deemed unsafe by health Canada. Oh yeah, and take it easy on the acetaminophen! Latest studies show that using it too often – especially in children – can raise liver enzymes to levels which are not healthy. There are a few excellent natural solutions for these drippy-nosed rug rats. Boiron puts out very easy to use, preservative and chemical free



homeopathics called Coryzalia for Colds, and Stodal for coughs. They are easy to use, kids love the taste, and they are safe and effective.

7) Manage your membranes

Keep your mucous membranes moist by drinking lots of fluids. Change your contacts with clean hands, and for God's sake, stop picking your nose and rubbing your eyes!

6) Achieve your Zzzzz's

Get some sleep, silly! Get enough to feel well rested. Sleeplessness and stress are proven to contribute to an unhealthy immune system. If you do get sick, sleep is also your biggest ally in recovery. Ensure you have a congestion-free sleep whether you're sick or not! I strongly recommend using a nasal strip, like Breathe Right, to open your airways and stay asleep longer. They are natural, non-invasive, and proven to open your airway allowing you to breathe easier and get the rest your body so desperately needs.

5) Get infected...with the good bugs!

Be proactive with probiotics! Antibiotics aren't effective against viruses, but they will kill the friendly bacteria in your gut too. Latest science shows a happy gut means a healthy immune system. Lifestyle stresses, a poor diet, pollution, lack of exercise – all can reduce the quantity of good bacteria in our intestine, where up to 80% of the body's immune response originates!

Unfortunately, these days you can't get enough probiotics from diet alone. Much of the beneficial bacteria we would normally obtain through fresh fruits and vegetables are removed in modern food preparation processes. And, no, yogurt won't be enough no matter how much you eat. Whether you're looking to prevent getting ill, fighting a cold or flu, or you're told to take antibiotics, you'll need high dose probiotics. Reach for the Bio-K – a proven probiotic with 50 billion live bacteria per dose.

4) Sneeze into your sleeve please!

You may have heard this one just as much as 'wash your hands'... but you're still not doing it!? Why not!? Do it!

3) Shower your nose!

I bet if you hear one more person tell you to wash your hands to prevent colds/flu, you're going to have a meltdown. But here's a new recommendation: irrigate your nasal cavity ie. Neti Pot your nose! It'll flush out the viruses and bacteria harbouring in your honker thereby reducing chances of impending infections.



2) Don't forget your "D"

If you live north of 32 degree's latitude, you're low or deficient in vit-D (the sunshine vitamin) and you are more susceptible to colds and flu. Ask your doctor to get tested for your blood serum levels of 25OHD. If they are lower than 80 ng/dl, start supplementing daily at the levels your doctor recommends.

1) An ounce of prevention

...is worth a pound of cure! And now, the jury is in. The world's largest Echinacea study ever done validates its efficacy and safety in prevention of cold and flu. It's called Echinaforce by A. Vogel. Scientists at the Common Cold Centre at Cardiff University's School of Biosciences have recently completed the world's largest clinical study on Echinacea purpurea. Touted as a natural remedy for cold and flu, some have recently questioned its efficacy - particularly as newer, cheaper and less concentrated formulations have flooded the market. But this recent study set out to establish once and for all the short and long-term effects of Echinacea on cold and flu viruses. The scientific conclusions are clear – the use of a properly formulated Echinacea means fewer colds, reduced duration of cold symptoms, and less reliance on synthetic pain relievers containing acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Have you taken your Echinaforce today?!

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This article appears in the October 2013 issue of Tonic Toronto

