AN INDEPENDENT SUPPLEMENT BY MEDIAPLANET TO USA TODAY

OTC stocking stuffers Thoughtful gifts for cold, flu & allergy sufferers Doctor's orders How to prepare for cold & flu season Home for the holidays Creating a healthy home environment



December 2010

COLD, FLU & ALLERGIES







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It's the sneezin' season, but winter sniffles can be misleading and the similarities between symptoms of the flu, cold and nasal allergies can be confusing.



consequences of influenza

OTC stocking stuffer gift guide Gifts that keep on giving.

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eciphering the symptoms

ymptoms of flu, cold, and allergies tend to mimic each other. which can cause vou to make an incorrect diagnosis and to treat your ailments with the wrong medications. If allergies are left untreated, it can cause more serious conditions like sinusitis, ear infections, or even triggeryour asthma.Learn about the differences in the chart to the right and talk to your physician about a complete medical exam to help determine the cause of your discomfort:

Allergies

Nasal allergies occur when your nasal cavity becomes irritated and inflamed during exposure to an allergen. Unlike the flu or cold, allergies are not contagious. If you have

a high temperature or an achy body, it is most likely the flu or cold rather than allergies. Common indoor and outdoor allergens include tree, grass and weed pollen, dust mites, animal dander.mold.and cockroaches.

Flu and colds

A flu or cold is commonly caused by a virus. You can get a flu or cold from another person who has the virus, even though you may be in good health. This happens when you breathe in germs or come in direct contact with the infected person.To prevent yourself from getting a flu or cold, get a flu shot every year, wash your hands frequently, use a disinfectant, and be careful when sneezing and coughing around others. To learn more about the flu and find a flu shot clinic near you, visit www. aafa.org/flu.

THE DIFFERENCES IN SYMPTOMS

Allergies

Symptoms: Allergies usually cause runny nose (thin clear discharge), stuffy or congested nose, violent sneezing, wheezing, coughing, watery and itchv eves.

Fever: There is no fever with allergies.

When: Anytime of the year: spring, summer, fall or winter.

Warning: Symptoms begin almost immediately after exposure to allergens.

Duration: Symptoms last a long time, as long you are exposed to the allergen. If the allergen is present all year long, symptoms can be chronic.

Flu or cold

Symptoms: Flu or cold symptoms usually includes runny nose (thick yellow discharge), aches and pains, sore and scratchy throat along with sneezing and coughing.

Fever: If you have a fever it is more likely a flu or cold rather than allergies.

When: Most common in the winter, but are also possible in the fall.spring or summer.

Warning: Usually takes a few days for flu and cold symptoms to appear.

Duration: Flu or cold symptoms should clear up within a few days to a week. Rarely lasts more than 10 days.



COLD. FLU & ALLERGIES 3RD EDITION, DECEMBER 2010

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MEDIA PLANET

INSIGH

Daily doses for Seasonal sickness

You have plenty to worry about this holiday season without having to catch up on missed school or work because of a cold or the flu.

The good news is there are things that you can do to avoid suffering through another season of sickness.

Know the symptoms

Flu is not the common cold. People who have a cold usually experience a runny nose, sore throat, sneezing, and coughing, but can continue to work. Influenza, commonly known as the flu, is an infectious disease that can be very serious even for healthy people. People with influenza have muscle aches, fever, extreme fatigue, headache, and sometimes a hacking cough; children can also experience vomiting and diarrhea.

Don't gamble with the flu

To prevent influenza, place your bet on vaccinating your family. Flu vaccine is the most effective way to protect against influenza; it can reduce your risk of getting sick and prevent spreading the virus to family, friends, and people throughout your community.

Keep germs at bay

You can also help to stop cold and flu



Carol J. Baker, M.D. Past President, National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

"If you do get sick, stay at home for at least 24 hours after your fever goes away so you don't spread cold or flu viruses to others."

viruses from spreading with these healthy habits from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing; throw tissues in the trash after use; if you don't have a tissue, cover your cough into your elbow.

Wash your hands. If soap and water aren't available, use an alcoholbased hand rub or wipes.

Keep household surfaces clean,

wiping them down with a disinfectant according to directions on the product label.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

If you do get sick, stay at home for at least 24 hours after your fever goes away so you don't spread cold or flu viruses to others.

Treat the flu

Your doctor can prescribe antiviral medications to treat your flu infection. These medications can shorten the time you are sick, if taken within the first 48 hours. People who have underlying conditions (e.g., asthma, diabetes, heart disease, pregnancy) can prevent flu complications if they receive prompt antiviral medication. Antiviral drugs can also be prescribed to help prevent influenza if you've been exposed to the virus.

Relieve a cold

The best way to conquer a cold is to stay hydrated and get plenty of rest. For viral infections, nasal irrigation can also help to loosen mucus. Since the cold is caused by a virus, antibiotics will not treat it. Overthe-counter medications can help relieve symptoms, but will not shorten the amount of time you are sick.



Flu-fighting advice for families

Renowned pediatrician William Sears, M.D., developed the following flu prevention plan to help families stay healthy:

Ward off germs

Germs are spread through hand-to-hand contact or when sneezed or coughed into the air. To minimize exposure, avoid shaking hands, keep away from others who are sick and stay out of crowded rooms.

Keep hands clean

The first and easiest line of defense against the spread of germs is washing hands often, but when soap and water are not available, antibacterial hand wipes like Wet Ones[®] wipes are an effective alternative.Wet Ones[®] antibacterial hand wipes are proven to be just as effective as gel hand sanitizer in killing 99.99 percent of germs but they also clean away dirt and messes and won't dry out skin like alcohol-based hand sanitizers.

Eat immune-boosting foods

The best way to boost the immune system is to increase



William Sears, M.D. Pediatrician

the intake of fruits, vegetables, seafood and yogurt.

Clear the nose and sinuses

Flu germs often settle first in the nose and sinuses, so it's important to keep nasal passages clear by either flushing them out with a saltwater solution or loosening secretions with a facial steamer or vaporizer.

Stay Active

Movement mobilizes the immune system.Kids who sit too much—especially indoors—get sick more often. Movement also mellows the mood, as stress depresses the immune system.

For more information on hand hygiene, visit www.wetones.com.

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During the holidays, you may come in contact with more than your friends and family-you'll also greet germs that can make you sick.



Prevent germs from crashing your holiday party Baby, It's Cold Outside.

Below you will also find a few tips to keep you and your family safe and healthy:

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

Holiday gatherings mean close contact. Make sure to let others know if you're sick-keep a distance and avoid any direct contact. Always wash your hands with hot, soapy water before handling food and after using the bathroom. Remember, hands that look clean may be contaminated with germs. Add some seasonal cheer to hand washing by singing your favorite holiday tune for 20 seconds while you lather up.

Food safety

Safe food handling rules should apply all year round to help prevent foodborne illness:

Use clean sponges, towels, and washcloths. When dirty, they can harbor bacteria, which can be transferred to cookware, your hands, and



throughout the kitchen.

Disinfect countertops and surfaces often to kill harmful germs! Not all cleaning products disinfect, so be sure to select products that are labeled as disinfectants. Follow usage directions carefully. Learn more—www. aboutgerms.com/faq.html#5 and www.aboutantimicrobials.com.

Frequent small clean-ups help eliminate big messes that can make for bigger jobs later and potentially attract pests into your kitchen.

Please check out www.Stop Germs.org to look through an in-

teractive house and see where germs and pests may lurk this holiday season and how to get rid of them.

The Alliance for Consumer Education is a nonprofit organization, which promotes responsible and beneficial use of products to ensure a safer, healthier, and cleaner environment in homes, businesses, and the community. The purpose of ACE's Disease Prevention program (www.StopGerms.org) is to provide information necessary to break the cycle of disease transmission. ACE is affiliated with the Consumer Specialty Products Association.



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NEWS

Your healthy home solutions

Whether you're staying home for the holidays, visiting a relative with pets, or traveling to a moldy hotel, make sure to take the necessary steps to minimize exposure to your allergy triggers.

Managing indoor air quality

Everyone spends more time indoors during the winter months, so it is important to be aware of your indoor air quality.As you prepare for indoor activities during the winter months, consider these guidelines: Consider using HEPA room air cleaners in specific areas where you sleep or spend a lot of time in the house and inspect the

need cleaning or replacing. If you use a wood-burning stove, talk with your physi-

filters in old cleaners to see if they

cian or research ways to reduce release of irritants caused by smoldering embers and other combustible materials.

3 Thoroughly clean and dry all decorations and ornaments, seal them in plastic bags, and store the bagged items in airtight containers.

4 If you are sensitive to dust or mold, wear a dust mask while unpacking or working with decorations taken from storage.

Clean and replace the HVAC filters in your furnace before turning on the heat for the first time.
When your heat is on, keep humidity levels below 50 percent in rooms where you spend most of your time.

Z Limit scented candles, potpourri, air fresheners, plant arrangements, and holiday baking with strong odors.

Tips for managing Christmas trees and holiday greens

Some evergreens, particularly junipers and cedar, may pollinate even in winter. If you bring a live evergreen tree into your home, use the following guidelines to help reduce exposure to allergens.

■ Wipe the trunk thoroughly with a solution of lukewarm water and diluted bleach (one part bleach/20 parts water) to eliminate any mold.

Use a leaf blower to remove visible pollen.

Artificial Christmas trees are suitable substitutes as long as they are not coated with sprayed on "snow."

For more tips on having an allergyfriendly holiday, visit www.aafa.org.

> Source: Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

\checkmark NEW YEAR SOLUTIONS: HEALTHY HOME TIPS

Anny allergy sufferers remain indoors when outdoor air contains high levels of pollen and spores, but they may be confronted with allergens indoors as well. With aggressive cleaning, you can improve indoor air quality and reduce allergy symptoms. Remove the source of as many irritants as possible, including pets, carpets, overstuffed furniture, stuffed toys, non-encased mattresses, and bedding that cannot be washed in hot water.

There may be more allergens on surfaces than in the air. Surface allergens can be dispersed into the air easily by sitting or dusting. Reducing humidity decreases dust mite and mold growth. Air conditioners help reduce the humidity as well as prevent exposure to outdoor allergens. You can reduce the number of outdoor allergens by keeping windows and doors closed and the air conditioner set on re-circulate. Consider these tips:

Control dust mites. Keep surfaces clean and uncluttered.

Vacuum twice weekly. Vacuuming helps to minimize allergens.

Prevent animal dander. Doctors suggest that people allergic to animal dander not keep pets with feathers or fur.

Prevent entry of pollen by keeping windows and doors closed. Air conditioning in warm weather helps to control dust mites by reducing humidity.

Avoid mold spores. Reduce moisture around the bathroom, kitchen and other damp areas of the home.
 Control cockroaches. Don't leave food or garbage uncovered.

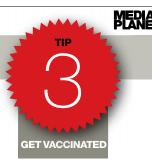
For more tips on indoor allergen reduction, visit www.aafa.org.

Source: Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America





INSPIRATION





THE FLU VACCINE

A family affair

Every flu season is different and unpredictable, but each year, influenza causes people to get sick and can even lead to hospitalizations or deaths. The best way to protect your family is annual vaccination.

This year, influenza vaccination is recommended for everyone older than six months of age.

There are two forms of influenza vaccine, one that is injected and a nasal spray. The injected vaccine is approved for everyone older than six months; the nasal spray is approved for healthy people two to 49 years old, but is not recommended for pregnant women. This year, a new highdose vaccine is also available to help improve vaccine effectiveness in people 65 and older.

Whichever vaccine you receive, remember that the influenza vaccine is safe, effective and time tested. In fact, 100 million Americans are vaccinated every year.

Influenza season doesn't usually peak until January or later. If you haven't been vaccinated yet, do so now—you still have time to receive full protection.

Still have questions? Visit PreventChildhoodInfluenza.org to learn more.

> The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

Question: How can I prevent exposure to the influenza virus? **Answer:** Get vaccinated, cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, wash your hands and avoid touching your eyes.

Families Fighting Flu

early spring marks the flu season in the United States a respiratory illness that can be caused by any number of influenza virus strains, the flu is spread from person to person causing mild to severe illness. It poses a threat to all, but particularly to the elderly and the very young.

he fall through

On February 27, 2004 Amanda Kanowitz came home from school with a slight cough, which by Saturday had developed into a fever. Her condition continued to worsen over the weekend, and Amanda's parents, Richard and Alissa, spoke with a doctor who told them that there were a number of strains of flu virus going around that year. The best thing they could do, he told them, was keep their daughter hydrated.That night they put their daughter to bed not realizing the extent to which her health had deteriorated. They did not realize the severe reaction Amanda's body had to the virus, and by morning she had passed away at age four-anda-half.

At the time Amanda had not

been vaccinated against the flu, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), recommended vaccination only to children six to twentythree months. When samples sent to the CDC confirmed that it was, in fact, influenza that had killed their daughter, the Kanowitzs decided to become involved and discover how otherwise healthy children can die so quickly from the flu.

In partnership with other families who had experienced similar loss, the Kanowitzs formed the nationwide volunteer organization, Families Fighting Flu. With Mr. Kanowitz as acting president of the organization, one of the first things they did was to work with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) on changing the recommended age of vaccination to include children up to fiftynine months old. By 2008 the CDC recommended immunization for children under eighteen, and as of 2010, the CDC recommends universal immunization. "It's clear that until people realize that there's recommended guidelines for everyone to get vaccinated, they often don't," explains Mr. Kanotwitz. Families Fighting Flu continues

to advocate for flu awareness in



Amanda Kanowitz

an attempt to make people realize that influenza can be a serious and even deadly illness. Mr Kanowitz warns that, "Without vaccination you're really at risk, and your children are at risk, and the best way to protect yourself is to get a seasonal influenza vaccination."

The CDC recommends a number of different everyday preventative measures, like covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, washing your hands, and avoiding touching your eyes or mouth during flu season. While these measures are good for everyday maintenance, vaccination is still the first and best step in flu prevention. "Go get yourself and your children vaccinated for influenza each and every year. There's nothing else that can stop influenza or limit its harmful effects better than vaccination," says Mr.Kanowitz.

"When you look at what happened with my daughter, it was her body's reaction to the virus. Had she had the vaccine, her body probably would have reacted better and she'd be here."

AUSTIN KILHAM

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Allergies

INSPIRATION

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