Isn't it curious how many people have a yearly cold, flu or chest congestion that extends over the winter season? Even more curious is that they come to expect it each year... and that is exactly what they get. It becomes almost a winter rite of passage and often is passed around a family and even the closest friends.

Physically a virus is usually blamed for a cold, flu or chest congestion. Colds are physically caused by viruses infecting the sinuses, and both the oral and nasal passages. But, these viruses are around us all the time. In actuality being sick on a purely physical level is due to a depressed or lowered immune system. Our body is simply not able to defend itself against these common viruses. As a first line physical response the best approach is prevention. And the best prevention is to increase or support the immune system. It would be easy to look at a daily multivitamin and nutrient supplement or additional Vitamin D, which can have long term positive effects. However, let's go beyond the usual supplements and look at some other even more basic preventative and simple restorative measures.

Preventative Measures:
01. Get plenty of fluids. Colds are usually accompanied by a mild fever... just enough to dry out your lips. Even a mild fever causes the body to loose fluids and the mucous membranes to dry up. This creates a friendly environment for viruses to grow. The old adage of eight 8-ounce glasses of water applies here. Even better drink distilled water with ¼ teaspoon Redman's sea salt to a quart of distilled water. This replenishes electrolytes and keeps hydration at optimal levels. In fact, distilled water with the sea salt is an excellent all the time drink that continually supports both the body and the immune system.

02. Get plenty of sleep. Most people don't get enough sleep so increase your sleep time by at least one hour. Sleep both recharges and rejuvenates the body. Sleep is especially vital for the correct functioning of the immune system and the brain. With sleep deprivation the immune function decreases; when this sleep deficit is accumulated, your resistance to infection is dramatically lowered.

03. Wash your hands! Good hygiene is always appropriate and so important in preventing colds and flu. Our hands constantly come in contact with all sorts of bacteria and viruses that we unconsciously transfer to our mouth, nose and eyes. Effective hand washing is about 20 seconds of soaping. This is the time it takes to sing one chorus of “Row, Row, Row your Boat.” In addition immediately discard any paper towels or tissues that you use and pass up sharing glasses, towels and eating utensils. Hand washing is the first line of defense before the viruses enter the body.

04. Cough into your elbow. Coughing spreads viruses easily 20 and even 30 feet depending on the strength of the cough or sneeze. When you cough into your elbow you contain the viruses rather than spread them air borne to anyone near you.

Restorative Measures:
01. Use your mini trampoline! The simple act of bouncing up and down without the heels leaving the mat is sufficient to pump the lymphatics, which don’t have a pump of their own. Bounce about 100 times per minute. Add massaging the lymphatics on the chest end the neck to loosen the mucous plus a forceful exhale breathing with the exhale longer than the inhale to blow the toxins away from the body. This simple process for 20 minutes clears the lymphatics and allows for the sinus drainage, relieving the congested feelings that also play into headaches. Use that trampoline 2 to 3 times a day and feel your whole body respond. This is probably the one thing that you wont feel like doing; however, it’s worth the effort. Once you have experienced what the trampoline can do for you, you will be sold.
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02. Essential oils can bring relief. Using 1-2 drops of Eucalyptus rubbed into the chest and upper back once daily will assist in the loosening up of the mucous in the chest. Lavender, a 1-2 drop applied directly over the Eucalyptus relaxes and soothes the lungs so they don’t get sore and irritated with coughing. Oils have a long term cumulative effect so use them judiciously. Remember essential oils are full strength and a little goes a very long way.

03. Herbals provide symptom support. Chop fresh ginger and boil in distilled water for about 20 minutes makes a strong ginger tea then add a teaspoon of honey to each cup. Together they assist the loosening of the mucous, soothing a throat sore from coughing and a stomach’s irritation. The peppery taste of the ginger coupled with the sweetness of the honey has a nourishing feel to the body.

04. Use the immune strengthening meditation several times during the day. This meditation is simple and can be used daily as a preventative measure in the am and pm and also more frequently during the day as a restorative measure. Essentially, lie down and begin a slow easy breathing. First, focus your attention and feel the vibration in the different aspects of your body – head, shoulders, chest and so on. Second, start at the feet and feel the energy moving up your body and back down. Repeat this three times. Third, feel the vibration in your entire body and hold this as long as possible. This is one of 5 meditations available on the CD Meditation: Beginnings available at: LivingThePresence.org.

These measures should relieve your symptoms just as fast and even better than many over the counter remedies without the subtle side effects. Frequently with the continued use of the trampoline, the duration of the cold is shortened. Since these remedies enhance and support the immune system they don’t just cover up the symptoms rather they go a long way for as easier, healthier recovery.

We have been considering only the physical side of colds, flu’s and chest congestion and simple preventative and restorative measures. Remember there are also deeper layers of thinking patterns, emotions and vibrational awareness.

We will address these at a later date.

For more information on strengthening the immune system to assist in the prevention of disease and symptoms of disease, to balance the body for optimal functioning, enhance clarity of thinking, and augment spiritual growth, consider a Conscious Health Reading. See the website for details. LivingThePresence.org