

Winter Illness Prevention

Colds, flus, and other respiratory illnesses are often more common in colder months. Since people are indoors more often, viruses can pass more easily from person to person. An ounce of prevention is most definitely worth a pound of cure. Here are some tips for preventing common winter illnesses and keeping you and your loved ones healthy.

1. Thoroughly wash hands

Germs can survive on the surface for days to weeks. To minimize the spread of germs from direct contact, it is important to keep your hands clean. To ensure your hands are washed thoroughly, it is recommended to scrub for at least 20 seconds using warm water and soap. Also, washing beneath fingernails, around cuticles, and in the creases of your hands should be included in your handwashing. After washing your hands, you should avoid touching surfaces like the sink, faucet, door handles, and phone. You can use a towel to open doors and throw it away in the trash.

2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth

Cold and flu germs can infect you through your eyes, nose, and mouth. If you must touch your face, wash your hands first.

3. Cough and sneeze properly

To avoid spreading germs by touch or through the air, when you cough or sneeze, it should be into a tissue or the center of your elbow. To sneeze properly, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you feel a sneeze coming on, and if you don't have a tissue, sneeze into the crease of your elbow to prevent spreading germs; always throw used tissues away immediately and wash your hands afterward.

4. Get vaccinated

Stay up to date with immunizations. Get a yearly flu shot and ensure you've had the pneumococcal vaccine if you're 65 or older to reduce infection risks and severe illnesses.

5. Disinfect your home

Practice basic disinfection protocols to keep everyone safe in the home. In addition, don't share utensils, glasses, or plates with others, and throw away

toothbrushes after being sick. In addition to disinfecting doorknobs, light switches, faucet handles, and countertops regularly, you should launder communal hand towels often.

6. Avoid large crowds

Social gatherings are a breeding ground for the spread of germs. Your risk of contracting illness is increased when gathering with large crowds.

7. Avoid sick people sick

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. If someone is sneezing or coughing, keep your distance. Limiting contact with infected people is best until they have recovered. For most common illnesses, waiting two weeks after the person becomes infected is enough time to reduce the risk of transmission.

8. Maintain a healthy lifestyle

A healthy lifestyle strengthens the immune system. Eat a balanced diet rich in whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Engaging in regular physical activity helps to improve overall fitness. Get sufficient sleep to support a healthy immune system.

9. Stay home if you are sick

This will prevent the spread of germs to others and give your body a chance to recover. Stay home if you have a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting until symptom-free for at least 24 hours.

10. Have an at-home survival kit

Be ready for a winter illness to strike in your home by having get-well essentials stocked. Ensure you are prepared with over-the-counter medication for the most common winter illness symptoms, drinks and food for wellness, and the necessary items to get better.

The best way to avoid winter illnesses is to take preventive actions to stop the spread of germs. So, prioritize your health this winter by following these illness-prevention tips to keep yourself and those around you safe from common winter illnesses.