

What is the Common Cold?

Winter is now here and also what people name the cold and flu season. You have seen colds spread like wild fire throughout the office and hope that you will avoid catching it this season. This article looks at what exactly a common cold is and how you can help your immune system fight off the cold this season.

The Immune System: The strength of our immune system is what makes the difference between who gets sick and who doesn't. The secrets lie in understanding a bit about how it all works. Our immune system is responsible for keeping bacteria, viruses and toxins from interrupting the normal functions of the body. It is a complex defence system that involves specialised cells that recognise and destroy foreign entities. Having a strong immune system not only affects your ability to fend off common illnesses like colds, flu, or a stomach virus, but it can also play a role in protecting you against serious conditions such as cancer or heart disease.

What is the common cold?

Common colds can be caused by many different viruses. The most common types are rhinovirus, coxsackievirus and coronavirus.

Who is affected? People of all ages are affected by the common cold with children, the elderly and people with weakened immune systems being most susceptible.

How is the common cold spread?

You can contract a cold either by touch or air. If you touch someone or something with a cold virus on it and then touch your eyes, mouth, or open wound,



you may become infected. You may also inhale droplets of a virus in the air when someone coughs or sneezes.

What to expect? You may develop congestion, a cough, runny nose, itchy eyes and throat, watery eyes, tiredness, and occasionally fever. Fever is more common in children than in adults. These symptoms usually last 7-10 days.

Is there a cure for the common cold? There is no cure for the common cold. You can treat the symptoms with over the counter medications. You should also try to get extra rest and drink plenty of fluids. This means more fluids than usual. If your symptoms do not improve after 7-10 days, you should see a doctor.

Preventing: It is not always possible to prevent the common cold but there are many steps you can take to reduce your risk.

- ✓ **Wash your hands** frequently. This is the single most important step to preventing the spread of disease and staying healthy. If you can't wash your hands with soap and water, use an alcohol based hand rub.
- ✓ Take a **daily multivitamin** or immune booster supplement.
- ✓ **Exercise regularly**, at least 30 minutes a day.
- ✓ Eat a healthy, **balanced diet**. Make sure you eat plenty of fruits and vegetables and limit your saturated fats.
- ✓ Drink at least **2 to 3 litres of water** a day.
- ✓ **Avoid people with a cold** or the flu, especially when they have a fever.



How can natural therapies help the immune system?

Acupuncture

Studies show that acupuncture can improve immune system health by increasing natural killer cell activity for fighting illness. This is achieved by needling specific acupuncture points and their effect on the nervous system. Other effects of acupuncture relax the body, help you sleep and promote healthy digestion, all of which support a healthy immune system.

If you are experiencing cold like symptoms, acupuncture has been shown to decrease the severity of the symptoms of a cold in helping to relieve the congestion and open airways, dry excessive mucus, relieve sore throat and sinus pressure and improve your overall immune function.

Your acupuncturist may suggest some Chinese herbs or other supplements to enhance your immune system and in conjunction with the acupuncture treatment reduce the severity of cold symptoms.

Cupping therapy

Cupping Therapy is an ancient Chinese method of clearing local congestion. By creating suction and negative pressure, cupping is effective for common cold because it drains the excess fluids and toxins from the body and encourages blood flow to stagnant muscles. This helps relieve congestion and expel mucus caused by the cold.



For more information regarding natural treatments to help your immune system talk to one of our therapists today.



Products available at Assiram Natural Therapies to support you through the winter season

Ki

Immune Defence & Vitality Formula

Ki is formulated to enhance the immune system and boost the body's energy reserves. The **plant extracts** in Ki help increase the number of white blood cells and the activity of the body's natural killer cells to promote a

healthy immune system. These extracts include **Astragalus**, a major herb prescribed in China for strengthening the immune system. **Shiitake** is a Japanese mushroom used in medicine to enhance the immune system and increase stamina and endurance. **Olive leaf** is hugely popular around the world as a general health tonic, antioxidant and to help maintain immune system vitality.



Ki can be used for the following conditions

- ✓ Reducing risk of colds & flu
- ✓ Lack of energy / tiredness
- ✓ Susceptibility to allergies including hay fever
- ✓ Sore throat, cough or upper respiratory infection
- ✓ Post viral fatigue or chronic fatigue syndrome
- ✓ Physical or emotional stress
- ✓ Recovery after illness or weakened health
- ✓ Peak endurance and stamina
- ✓ Digestive weakness and poor bowel function
- ✓ Circulation and general cardiovascular health
- ✓ Physical or mentally demanding work

Winter Warmers

Wheat bags now available

Warm up this winter with a wheat bag to keep the bed warm or help to soothe your aches and pains.

Heat therapy has been used for hundreds of years. Applying heat to the body stimulates circulation and increases blood flow to help repair tissues on a cellular level. For our full selection of wheat bags come in and ask at our clinic.



CLINIC OPEN ON SATURDAYS

If you are too busy during the working week to take time out for yourself

Assiram Natural Therapies is open on Saturdays from 9.00am to 3.00pm.

Book in for a remedial massage or acupuncture treatment today!

END OF FINANCIAL YEAR CELEBRATIONS

To say thank you to your staff members for all the great work they have done for the financial year why not reward them with a gift voucher for a massage at our clinic, or we can come to your office and treat all your staff with a corporate seated massage.

For more information contact Christine on 3229 0115.

References: www.generalmedicine.suite101.com www.about.com/nutrition www.triangleacupunctureclinic.com Medline Plus Medical Encyclopedia 24 May 2006



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Remedial Massage

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