

Natural Treatments for Coughs, Colds and Flu

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Introduction

Colds develop for a number of reasons including:

- a) Your body's way of telling you to slow down
- b) Your immune system is compromised
- c) A cleansing or spring cleaning of the body

Most of the time, if your immune system is strong and if you get enough rest or fluids, colds will go away on their own. Many people actually feel **better** after their cold has been resolved than they did before they got sick, as the pathogen stimulates the immune system and toxins are eliminated.

When to get help:



Your cold:

- is associated with a **high fever**,
- accompanied by **excessive mucus** that can cause choking,
- lasts more than a couple of weeks,
- moves down into the chest
- develops into **bronchitis**
- if you start to experience **flu-like** symptoms
- if you are concerned that it may be more **serious**

Home care:

- **Increase your water intake.**
- Boil water with freshly cut **ginger** and add lemon and honey (ginger: to breakdown and expel mucus; lemon: rich in Vitamin C; honey: antibacterial & antiviral and soothes a sore throat)
- Drink hot water with apple cider vinegar and a sprinkle of cayenne pepper. (Cayenne pepper is very warming and rich in Vitamin C)

- Eat and drink only **warming foods**. If you eat cold or icy foods or drinks it may weaken your immune system and create a more severe cough.
- Get lots of **rest and sleep**
- Continue with **slow, gentle exercise** or stretch to facilitate movement of lymph, only if you normally exercise (UNLESS YOU HAVE A FEVER!!!). However now is not the time to start exercising.
- Take a **hot bath** (Don't wet your hair or stay in for too long) and then wrap up in blankets to sweat the pathogen out of your system.

Supplements which help:

- **Vitamin C**
- **Garlic** (nature's antibiotic)
- **Echinaceae & Goldenseal** (Echinacea: helps to fight infection; Goldenseal inhibits mucus formation) (take to prevent getting sick when those around you are ill) Liquid is better if you can stomach it- otherwise pills will do. Take the dosage indicated on the bottle 4 x a day when you are sick and 1 x a day to prevent getting ill. Do not take continuously.
- **Grapefruit seed extract** (stimulates your immune system)
- **Zinc/Echinaceae lozenges** (for sore throats)

A supplement that I find to be highly effective and which contains many of the above ingredients is "**The Wellness Formulae**" by Source Naturals. This is available at most health food stores.

What else can you do?

- **Tongue scraping** is an ancient ayurvedic tradition that is very helpful in preventing infections as well as eliminating bad breath. Gently scrape the back of your tongue using a tongue scraper. Be sure to sterilize between uses.
- Change (or boil) your **toothbrush** every 3 months and after you have been sick

- **Netti potting** can be helping in preventing sinus infections. However avoid using if you already have a sinus infection, as it can spread the bacteria around making you feel worse.

AVOID

- **Dairy, wheat and bananas** which are mucus forming
- After eating sugar, your immune system is compromised by 50% for up to 4 hours.
- **Tiger balm, Menthol or Eucalyptus** may interfere with the effectiveness of your homeopathic remedy.
- **Don't Keep going** (allow your body to rest)

What can happen if you let it go untreated?

Fever

Fever is one of your body's reactions to infection. Usually the normal body temperature doesn't exceed 99 F (37.2 C). 98.6 F (37 C) is listed as normal body temperature, however isolated temperature elevations <103F (39.4C) usually are not dangerous in an adult. but in reality, a person's temperature varies somewhat during the day. Typically, it's slightly lower in the morning and slightly higher in the evening. Don't give aspirin to children younger than 17 years of age. The use of aspirin has been linked with Reye's syndrome — a rare but serious illness that can affect the blood, liver and brain of children and teenagers after a viral infection. A fever can occur with many different conditions. The associated signs and symptoms may help identify the cause. For example nausea and vomiting with a fever may indicate gastroenteritis. A fever with a productive cough and thick, yellow or green phlegm may indicate pneumonia. By treating the fever allopathically, without knowing what is causing it, we are only masking the symptoms. Aggressively treatment may interfere with your body's immune response. Many viruses thrive at cool temperatures. Your body produces a fever to try to kill the virus.

Most fevers go away within a few days. Fever helps the body fight infections by stimulating natural defense mechanisms, however a high fever in a child can cause dehydration, seizures or brain injury.



Get medical help immediately if:

- A baby < 3 months has a rectal temperature of ≥ 100.5 F (38 C) or an ear temp ≥ 99.5 F (37.5)
- If a child >3 months maintains a temperature of 103 F (39.4 C) & is unresponsive to homeopathic treatment
- Adult with a temperature >104 F (40.0 C) or a temperature of 101 F (38.3 C) that persists for >3 days
- Call your doctor immediately if the fever is accompanied by severe headache, stiff neck, swelling of the throat or mental confusion, or if you see unusual rashes or bite marks.

What is Homeopathy?

Homeopathic medicines are minute doses of substances that work by eliciting an immune response

Constitutional (individualized) homeopathic treatment can:

1. Strengthen the immune system
2. Help you to deal with stress
3. Improve mood and feelings of wellbeing
4. Prevent chronic illness

Homeopathic medicine is extremely individualistic. As we are all unique, each of us presents with illnesses slightly differently. It is important to find the remedy that best matches your exact symptoms

Homeopathic terminology

Homeopathic nosodes

Nosodes are homeopathic medicines prepared from diluted viruses or bacteria. Since they are so dilute, they are completely safe to take. The theory behind nosodes is similar to that of vaccinations. Taking a homeopathic dilution of the pathogen is believed to prime the immune system, preparing it in the event that that person is exposed to that disease.

Influenzinum is a homeopathic medicine prepared from the strains of Influenza virus predicted for that season. Many people report that taking *Influenzinum 9c* once a week during the flu season protects them from getting the flu.

Genus epidemicus

The genus epidemicus is the homeopathic remedy which is found to be most effective in treating a large percentage of patients for a particular outbreak of disease. Every year homeopaths from all around the world share their findings as to which homeopathic remedy is most successful in treating the majority of patients infected with the flu.

Why use Homeopathy?

- Homeopathic medicines are completely safe and virtually free of any side effects. They are non-addictive and easy to take.
- Since it works at the level of the immune system, as your overall health many of your other ailments naturally disappear
- Homeopathy addresses the underlying issue, instead of simply masking the symptoms.
- Homeopathic medicines are FDA regulated
- Homeopathy is gentle enough even for newborns and the elderly

Homeopathic remedies for Colds

Aconite

- Must be used within 24 hours of onset
- Great remedy to keep at home
- Symptoms come on suddenly
- Complaints come on after exposure to dry cold, especially a cold, dry wind or getting chilled
- Complaints begin after a fright or sudden, shocking events.
- Early stages of an illness whether it be a cold, flu or other infection
- High fever alternates with chills
- Heat and flushing to face, pupils constricted,
- Thirst for cold drinks
- The mood is restless, fearful and anxious

Allium Cepa: (The Red Onion)

- Common cold
- Streaming eyes and nose
- Nasal discharge is profuse, watery and burns the upper lip
- Red, smarting, tearing eyes with bland tears
- **Sneezing:** profusely especially when entering a warm room
- Lump sensation at root of the nose
- Burning of nasal discharges
- Bland tears, but eyes smart
- Sore throat
- **Worse:** Warm room; Spring and August
- **Better:** Cold room; Fresh Air
- **Note:** In Allium Cepa the tears are bland, while the nasal discharge is acrid (burning)

While in Euphrasia, the tears are burning, while the nasal discharge is bland

Kali Bichromicum

- Discharges are tough, ropy, sticky mucus which can be drawn into long strings
- Complaints occurring in hot weather. (summer colds)
- Liability to take cold in open air.
- Cough: violent rattling, with gagging from thick, tenacious mucus in the throat; cough is worse when undressing; worse in the morning on waking

Pulsatilla:

- Bland **nasal catarrh**-either thick or runny and watery
- **Nose** is blocked in a warm room & in the evening
- Inflamed **eyelids**;
- Thick discharge from the **eyes**
- Frequent **sneezing**
- Loss of smell and taste
- **Worse:** warm room (sneezes); getting hot, lying down
- **Better:** fresh air, cold applications
- Mood: open, tearful, affectionate, clingy with a desire for company

Nat Mur:

- Watery, burning discharge from **eyes**
- Profuse, watery **nasal discharge** (like uncooked white of an egg) which drips down the back of the throat; Violent **sneezing**
- Hay fever with **cold sores**; Profuse nasal discharge alternating with blocked nose
- Sore eyes, sensitive to light
- **Worse:** sunshine; warm, stuffy rooms; seashore (may be better);
- **Better:** open air; washing in cold water

Homeopathic remedies for Flu

Oscillococcinum (or “Ossies”)

Oscillococcinum is the number one homeopathic remedy for flu and is more commonly sold than any other over the counter medicine for flu. If taken on the onset of flu, significantly decreases the duration and intensity of the flu. It is indicated for symptoms of influenza, including fever, chills, body aches and pains. It is free from side effects and drug interactions. No drowsiness or stimulant effect.

Ossies works best if you take it as soon as your body shows signs of getting the flu.

If you are unable to nip it in the bud, and the flu has already set in, it is often necessary to find your constitutional remedy. Your constitutional remedy is an individualized homeopathic remedy that best matches your specific symptoms. Here are some examples and their indications listed below:

Gelsemium

- Slow onset
- Heaviness and trembling limbs
- Shivering with chills up and down the spine without perspiration
- Great fatigue; sleepy, heaviness, heaviness of the eyelids
- Dullness; Difficulty concentrating
- Dry, hot fever without thirst
- Worse: Change of weather from dry to cold damp/wet; 10am
- Better: Urinations; Stimulants, e.g. alcohol, open air

Arsenicum Album

- Gastric flu: diarrhea and vomiting
- Great prostration
- Chilly
- Thirst for small sips of cold water
- Watery, burning discharges
- Fastidious (wants everything neat and orderly) even when sick

Eupatorium perfoliatum

- Chill followed by heat and sweating
- Intense bone pains, feels as if bones are broken
- Muscles ache
- Eyes, aching and sore
- Great thirst for cold water
- Red, congested face with white tongue
- Worse for: small of food, cold, open air, periodically, 7-9am, movement
- Better for: rest, warmth, perspiration

Baptisia

- Severe flu that come on suddenly
- High fever; Profuse perspiration
- Intense thirst
- With great delirium, thinks his body parts are “scattered and all in bits”
- Face is dull with a red hue, looks stuporous, dazed and sluggish, falls asleep while talking
- Gastric flu with vomiting and diarrhea

Other remedies

- **Belladonna:** high fever, comes on suddenly, enlarged pupils, delirious, face is bright red, throbbing headache
- **Nux vomica:** gastric flu, irritable, after leading a sedentary lifestyle
- **Bryonia:** dry mouth, very thirsty for large quantities of water; pain-cannot tolerate any movement, needs to remain absolutely still; dry mucous membranes, stitching pains, better for rest, pressure

Homeopathic remedies for Coughs

Bryonia

- Dry, hacking cough in the evening and at night, without sputum
- Cough aggravated by eating, drinking, or entering a warm room
- Painful cough, worse from any movement, better for holding the chest
- Thirsty for large quantities of cold water
- Better for pressure, holding the chest, keeping absolutely still
- Worse for any movement

Drosera

- Spasmodic, dry, irritating cough
- Specific for whooping cough
- Paroxysms of cough, follow each other rapidly
- Coughing is so hard that it can result in vomiting or nosebleeds
- Feels as if there is a crumb or feather in the throat

Spongia tosta

- Dry, barking, croupy cough
- Wheezing and rasping
- Great dryness of all passages
- Scanty expectoration which tastes salty
- Throat is dry and constricted
- Cough sounds like a saw being driven by a board
- Feels as if breathing through a sponge
- Worse: warm room, talking
- Better: swallowing, warm drinks, sitting up and bending forward

Rumex crispus

- Hoarse, barking, paroxysmal, incessant, tiring cough
- Dry mucus membranes followed later by sticky mucus
- Teasing cough preventing sleep
- Tickling sensation in throat
- Feels as if there is a tickling or breadcrumb stuck in the throat

Antimonium tartaricum

- Cough is wet and rattling but scantily productive.
- Coarse rattling in the chest or larynx.
- Coughs and bronchitis of elderly patients, especially in the winter months
- Bronchitis of infants and elderly patients with feeble powers of expulsion.
- Difficult respiration, ameliorated by expectoration.
- Marked respiratory distress; uses accessory muscles of respiration.

Dry Cough

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| ■ Aconite | ■ Sambucus | ■ Phosphorous |
| ■ Belladonna | ■ Bryonia | ■ Causticum |
| ■ Hepar sulph | ■ Rumex crispus | ■ Sticta pulmonaris |
| ■ Spongia tosta | ■ Arum triphyllum | |

Acute Spasmodic cough

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| ■ Cuprum metallicum | ■ Ignatia |
| ■ Drosera | ■ Coccus cacti |
| ■ Corallium rubrum | ■ Mephitis putorius |

Productive cough

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|-----------------------|---------------|
| ■ Ferrum phosphoricum | ■ Ipecacuahna |
| ■ Blatta orientalis | ■ Merc sol |
| ■ Antimonium tart | ■ Pulsatilla |

For more information, please visit my website:

www.SanDiegoHomeopathy.com

Recommended reading

1. *A Patient's guide to Homeopathy* by Robert Ullman, Judyth Reichenberg
2. *The Science of Homeopathy* by George Vithoulkas
3. *Impossible cure* by Amy Lansky
4. *Portraits of Homeopathy* By Catherine Coultier

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