



# Tibb takes on Colds and Flu

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There's no doubt about it – going down with a cold is pure misery. We cannot breath properly, smell anything, our headaches constantly, we have an irritating cough, and we are forever blowing or wiping our tender nose. Little or no sympathy comes our way; instead, indifference, sometimes hostility and increasingly avoidance.

Colds and flu are similar in their presentation but should be differentiated between to allow treatment to be as effective as possible.

Typically, colds are self-limiting beginning slowly and lasting for 2 to 7 days. The first symptoms are usually a scratchy, sore throat, followed by sneezing and a runny nose. The body temperature is usually normal or only slightly elevated. A mild cough can develop several days later. Symptoms tend to be worse in infants and young children, who sometimes run temperatures of up to 38 to 39 °C.

Flu or influenza usually presents with a sudden onset of a headache, dry cough, and chills. The symptoms quickly become more severe than those of a cold. The flu sufferer often experiences muscle aches especially in the back and legs. Fever of up to 40 °C is common. The fever typically begins to subside on the second or third day, and then respiratory symptoms like nasal congestion and sore throat appear. Fatigue and weakness may continue for days or even weeks.

But why do some of us get a cold or flu, and other people do not? The answer, Tibb says, lies partly in nature of Physis to maintain inner harmony. If our qualities are out of balance or shifted towards coldness and moistness, which tends to happen around the winter season, and Physis is not able to re-establish harmony, we are more prone to developing colds and flu's. Similarly, if you have a Phlegmatic dominant or subdominant temperament, your constitution is already shifted towards coldness and moistness. These temperamental types often suffer with recurrent colds and flu particularly around a change of season. Prevention and treatment is therefore aimed at supporting Physis to maintain or restore harmony between the body's qualities, and the environment, by increasing heat and dryness.

As we know both colds and flu are caused by viruses and generally the viruses run their course in the system in between 4 to 5 days, although the flu is more difficult to treat. Symptoms of colds and flu are uncomfortable and distressing and as such need to be treated and managed. Antibiotics are ineffective against these viral infections and may result in causing more harm.

The age-old adage prevention is better than cure applies as much to colds and flu as all aspects of healthcare. With immune boosters, vitamins, minerals, natural and herbal treatments now more readily available than ever before, we can strengthen our defence mechanisms enough to effectively manage colds and flu's without too much external intervention.

Ways to build up the body's natural defences are:

- Eat a wide variety of foods, sticking to whole or natural food choices. Citrus fruits and chicken or mutton soups rich in in season vegetables and seasoned with garlic, ginger, cumin, chili and black pepper come highly recommended.
- Eat foods to suit the season. Ice-cream for example is not an acceptable food choice for the winter season.
- Increase your intake of vitamin C, E and calcium.
- Get some sun! Spending time outdoors during the warmer parts of the day is good for us and can help prevent the onset of colds and flu. Vitamin D is essential for a strong immune system and some consider it the panacea of immunity.
- Exercise is important! Exercise increases heat and dryness in the body, which helps to avoid that shift into coldness and moistness.
- Keep warm and dress appropriately for the weather conditions.
- Practice stress reduction techniques such as breathing exercises, yoga and meditation. Stress is another factor that compromises immune function.
- Wash your hands! One of the simplest techniques to reduce the spread of infection is to practice proper hand hygiene techniques. A normal hand wash with soap and water should last at least 18 seconds, covering all areas of the hands, in between the fingers, underneath the fingernails, the palms, thumbs and wrists.
- If you are particularly prone to developing recurrent colds and flus', then drink a cup of ginger and honey tea with a pinch of cayenne pepper and a dash of lemon juice daily.
- Regular use of a mild and natural laxative. Use of castor oil or senna may seem old-fashioned, but can positively impact your health. Laxatives should be taken in a small dose monthly.

Should prevention not be possible, and you do succumb to a cold or a flu then treatment should be approached holistically, focused not only on alleviating the symptoms but remedying the underlying imbalance of coldness and moistness. This results in a quicker resolution to the problem helping to minimise the chances of secondary bacterial infections. Patients also return to optimum health much faster. Colds and flu are contagious and you should take the time to rest and recover instead of spreading the virus. Another method is to keep as warm as possible as sweating out the fever is always beneficial. Remember that the fever is there for a reason; it is the body's natural way of destroying the virus. However, extremely high fevers in infants and young children can be dangerous, therefore always seek medical attention whenever you are unsure of the situation and especially when medication does not seem to be helping.

Tibb offers the following valuable advice when dealing with colds and flu:

- Get adequate rest. Sleep heals. Sleep is an uninterrupted period where Pheysis can heal and restore balance.
- Drink plenty of water. Everybody process needs water to function. It flushes toxins and nourishes the body. Warm or hot water is particularly beneficial.
- Gargle with warm salt water several times a day to ease a sore throat.
- Avoid cold foods and drinks. Restrict the intake of dairy products until you have recovered.
- Soups and teas as previously mentioned are recommended.
- Invest in a humidifier or vaporiser. Enhance the value with use of Blackseed, Eucalyptus, menthol and camphor.
- Keep your feet warm at all times.
- Use a saline solution to irrigate the nasal passages.

Colds and Flu's do not have to cause undue distress nor should they recur throughout the winter season. By following the advice above, and through respect for your body's needs, you can maintain a positive wellbeing and remain healthy. Here's looking forward to your good health.