

Preparing for Flu Season

Even without a shot

When a virus enters your body one of three things can happen:

- The virus can die, OR
- Your immune system can activate and kill the virus, OR
- The virus can survive, multiply, and produce a cold or the flu.

How do you keep this from happening?

Prevention

- *The power of produce:* Plant foods contain natural disease fighting compounds called phytochemicals and antioxidants. These substances can enhance your immune system. Therefore, eat vegetables and fruits at least 5 times a day, preferably 7-9 times.
- *Exercise:* Regular, moderate exercise will stimulate the fighting T cells into doing their job - attacking foreign invaders like germs and viruses.
- *Healthy Lifestyle:* To improve your immune system and resistance to disease commit to these guidelines: do not smoke, sleep 7-8 hours each night, eat a nutritious diet that includes breakfast, and avoid (or take steps to reduce) mental stress.
- *Germs:* To avoid the spread of germs, wash your hands frequently with warm soapy water (for at least 20 seconds), and do not share cups or food.
- *Water:* Drink 8-12 cups of water every day. Water helps to cleanse the body and remove toxins, including germs. By keeping body systems, especially the respiratory system, well hydrated, you can enhance your virus-fighting potential.

After Symptoms Occur

- *"Feed a cold, starve a fever?"* Many people say they can never remember whether to starve the cold or the fever. *The answer: neither!* The best advice is simply to listen to your appetite because being neither hungry nor stuffed will get rid of a cold, flu, or fever any faster. "Starving" an illness is particularly a bad

idea. Intentionally restricting calories only makes it harder to recover from an illness.

- *Drink plenty of fluids:* Drink significant amounts of water - at least 8-12 cups throughout the day. Additional water is needed not only to help fight infection, but also to combat dehydration brought on by fever. If you have flu symptoms, vomiting and diarrhea also increase your need for water above the normal 8-cup requirement.
- *Vitamin C:* Take 250 milligrams each day for 5-7 days. Although vitamin C will not prevent the cold, it may soften the blow, decrease symptoms (such as a runny nose and sore throat), and possibly shorten the duration of the cold by a day or so. Also drink plenty of vitamin-rich orange or grapefruit juice. These provide vitamin C as well as the fluids and calories your body needs.
- *Have some chicken soup!* Researchers have studied the possible benefits chicken soup may have on colds and flu. While they're not sure what the exact mechanism is, they believe that the benefit comes from something related to the smell or the taste of the soup. Eating chicken soup (or a soup that smells or tastes like chicken soup) may help increase the flow of mucus and clear nasal passages. It will not help cure or shorten your illness, but it may help relieve symptoms temporarily.
- *Garlic:* Garlic may help stimulate your immune system. Include one to three cloves of garlic each day in your diet by eating foods like: garlic bread, spaghetti sauce, lasagna, salad dressing with garlic, and by adding it to pasta salad, soups and stews. Do not use if you are on a blood thinning medication.
- *Pamper yourself:* Get plenty of rest and relaxation.

Be sure to always talk with your health care provider before taking any herbal, vitamin, or mineral supplement.

Chicken Noodle Soup

Nothing beats a bowl of fresh, homemade chicken noodle soup.

Ingredients

- 2 1/2 cups wide egg noodles
- 4 cups water
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 12 cups chicken broth
- 1 1/2 tablespoons salt
- 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1/3 cup cornstarch
- 1/4 cup water
- 3 cups diced, cooked chicken meat

1. In a medium saucepan, bring water to a boil. Add noodles and oil, and boil 8 minutes. Drain and rinse under cool running water, then drain again.
 2. In a large saucepan, bring broth, salt, and poultry seasoning to a boil. Stir in celery and onion. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes.
 3. In separate bowl, mix cornstarch and water together until cornstarch is completely dissolved, and gradually add to soup, stirring constantly.
 4. Add noodles and chicken, and heat through.
- Makes 8 servings.

Nutritional Information

Fat:	6.5g
Carbohydrates:	18.4g
Calories:	327
Protein:	45.9g