



# TO YOUR HEALTH

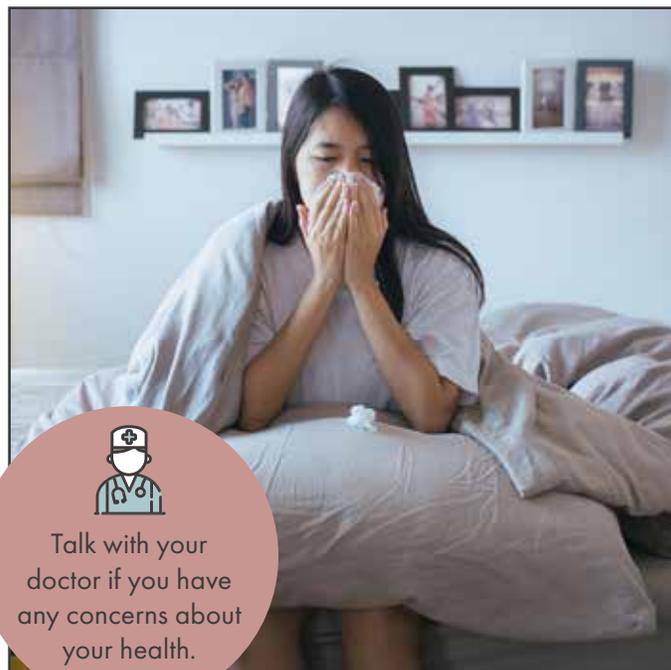
WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN

## The Common Cold

### HOW TO DEAL WITH IT

The common cold affects children 5-10 times per year and adults 2-3 times. Seems like someone in the family is always recovering from something, doesn't it? It is the main reason kids miss school and adults miss work. If you're running a low-grade fever, which is expected with the cold, you do need to stay home until you're fever-free for at least 24 hours without the help of medication.

Most people catch a cold in the winter or spring but you can get it anytime. The common cold usually resolves on its own in 7-10 days and, unfortunately, there's nothing we can do to speed it along. Antibiotics aren't prescribed for colds in America.



Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

#### EXPECTED SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:

- » Fever
- » Sore throat
- » Runny or stuffy nose
- » Coughing
- » Sneezing
- » Fatigue
- » Headaches
- » Body aches

#### WHAT CAN WE DO TO FEEL BETTER?

- » Tylenol or ibuprofen for discomfort or fever. (No ibuprofen for your little ones under 6 months old. No aspirin for anyone under 18 years old.)

- » Cool-mist humidifier to moisten the air. This will help stuffy noses and sore throats.
- » Drink extra fluids. Soups, popsicles, tea—anything that sounds good.
- » Cough drops to help the cough.
- » A spoonful of honey can also help with coughing and a sore throat. (No honey for babies under 1 year old.)
- » The effectiveness of cough and cold medicine is not fully proven, even in adults, and not recommended at all for children. It's always tempting to grab whatever promises to assist you in your illness, but try to be patient and just let it cycle out of your system on its own.
- » Get extra rest. Your body heals while you sleep!
- » Avoid smoke and other irritants.

- » Use nasal drops or sprays to help with stuffy noses.
- » Gargle with salt water to soothe a sore throat.

There are some popular alternative remedies for colds, but the research is mixed and they have not been proven to actually help. Some examples of these are Vitamin C, Zinc, and Echinacea. If you are healthy and not on prescription medication that contraindicate their usage, use as directed according to the label. (It should be noted that taking a zinc supplement may cause nausea, so be aware of that and discuss options with your doctor if needed.)

The most important thing we can do to prevent catching or spreading colds is to wash our hands! Colds spread like wildfire because the virus lives on everything we touch! So wash hands, keep hands away from face, cough/sneeze into a tissue or sleeve, and clean all surfaces/phones/toys frequently.

### WHEN SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED AND GIVE OUR DOCTOR A CALL?

- » Fever lasts longer than 3 days
- » Sore throat is severe and you're questioning strep throat
- » Nasal discharge present >14 days or if you ever have severe sinus pain
- » Coughing more than 3 weeks
- » Wheezing or shortness of breath
- » Moderate to severe muscle aches
- » Symptoms seem to be worsening instead of improving

Usually the first few days are the most uncomfortable and then we slowly start to feel better and drain less. Hopefully you enjoy the 'downtime' while you have it and enjoy a movie or two! Soon - back to work!



### PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS:

- » Wash your hands with soap and water frequently
- » Stay away from others when you are sick
- » Stay away from others who are sick
- » Keep your unwashed hands away from your face
- » Move away from others if you need to cough or sneeze
- » Disinfect surfaces and objects frequently
- » Don't share cups or utensils