

February Safety Sense

FLU & COLD PREVENTION

There are no known cures for colds and flu, so cold and flu prevention should be the goal. Most cold and flu viruses are spread by direct contact. Someone who has the flu sneezes onto their hand and then touches a phone, keyboard or desk. These germs can live for hours and in some cases weeks. The germs are picked up by the next person who touches the same surface or object. Because germs and viruses cling to your bare hands, muffling your coughs and sneezes with your hands results in passing the germs along to others.

Wash your hands: since germs can live for hours and even weeks make sure to wash your hands often or use an alcohol-based sanitizer on your hands.



Don't touch your face: Cold and flu viruses enter your body through your eyes, nose or mouth. The less you touch your face the less likely you will catch a cold or flu.

Drink plenty of fluids: Water flushes your system, washing out the poisons as it rehydrates you- a typical adult needs eight 8-ounce glasses of fluid each day.

Don't cover your sneezes and coughs with your hands: when you feel a sneeze or cough coming, use a tissue, then throw it away immediately.

Eat foods containing phytochemicals: "Phyto" means plants, and the natural chemicals in plants give the vitamins in food a supercharged boost. So be sure to eat dark green, red and yellow vegetables and fruits.



Cut alcohol consumption: Heavy alcohol use suppresses the immune system in a variety of ways. Heavier drinkers are more prone to initial infections as well as secondary complications. Alcohol also dehydrates the body- it actually takes more fluids from your system than it puts in.

Relax & get enough sleep: If you can teach yourself to relax, you can activate your immune system on demand. There's evidence that when you put relaxation skills into action, your interleukins (leaders in the immune system response against cold and flu viruses) increase in the bloodstream. Getting enough sleep helps keep your body charged and able to fight off colds and flu's better.

