

Allergy and Cold Treatments

Management of Allergy and Cold symptoms typically does not require antibiotic therapy, as there is no bacterial source of infection to treat. It is best to rest, take time off, hydrate, avoid further risk of infection, and treat the symptoms with supportive therapies as-needed. **Viral infections and Allergy Symptoms can seem very similar** and may take a week or longer to pass. If you **feed** your body well, get plenty of **sleep**, stay **hydrated** and avoid certain factors (excessive **stress**, physical **strain**, and **smoking**), your body should recover quickly.

- **REST IS BEST:** Sleep is essential to healing. You stand a better chance of quick recovery if you get a minimum of **6-8 hours of sleep**. Be sure to stay home from work/school until you feel better.
- **WASH YOUR HANDS:** Practicing basic hygiene is crucial to preventing the spread of viral infections (Cold and Flu). Wash your hands frequently, avoid touching your face, and always sneeze or cough into your elbow (not your hands).
- **HYDRATE:** Drinking **3-4 Bottles of water each day** is a good start to avoid dehydration when sick. Using nasal saline sprays, lubricating eye drops, and a Cool-Mist Humidifier at the bedside each night also helps to reduce symptoms of dry, irritated throat and nasal passages.
- **EAT WELL:** Avoid fried, greasy, spicy foods while sick, and **cut down on sugary foods** and foods that have **high amounts of simple carbohydrates** (Bread, Pasta, Rice, Potatoes...). Due to its pro-inflammatory nature, **avoid dairy** if possible while sick.

Medications and Therapy Options: When treating your symptoms, choosing the right medication for your situation is the key to a rapid recovery.

- **Complimentary Treatments: Measures to use alongside medications from the pharmacy.**

Salt-water gargles: Warm water and salt mixed and gargled/spit every 4-6 hours as needed to reduce throat irritation, postnasal drip and cough.

Elderberry Syrup: High concentration of antioxidants and vitamins, provides exceptional support to the immune system to shorten duration of symptoms.

Peppermint (candy, tea, topical oil): Used to alleviate stomach irritation and nausea

Vitamin D3: Supplement 2,000-3,000 units per day to speed up recovery and support your metabolism, emotional wellbeing and bone strength.

Zinc and/or Magnesium: Both are essential elements in the proper functioning immune system and metabolism, daily supplement helps to prevent many infections and decreases allergy symptoms.

Turmeric and/or Ginger: Potent anti-inflammatory supplements which help alleviate aches/pains to NSAIDs but without many of the harmful side effects.

(Stinging) Nettle Leaf: Supplement 1-2 capsules of freeze-dried Stinging Nettle 3-4 times daily for reduced allergy symptoms.

Vitamin C: 500mg daily supplement to decrease severity of cold and allergy symptoms.

Fish Oil: Omega-3 fatty acids found in cold-water fish and fish oil capsules contain compounds which help the body's immune system fight cold and prevent allergy symptoms.

Tea: Non-caffeinated tea with Turmeric, Peppermint, Honey, Cinnamon or Lemon helps to soothe the throat, reduce nausea, postnasal drip, headache, and alleviate nasal congestion.

Garlic, raw or cooked: Provides a host of immune-boosting properties and speeds up recovery

- **Over-the-counter Medications:** There are many medication options, including combination medications (Which have multiple active ingredients in a single drug). **As a general rule, if you don't know what medications are in a combination drug, avoid the product and stick to the single-ingredient options ('Advil', not 'Advil Cold & Sinus'...).**

Antihistamines: CETIRIZINE (Zyrtec), FEXOFENADINE (Allegra), LORATIDINE (Claritin), LEVOCETIRIZINE (Xyzal), DIPHENHYDRAMINE (Benadryl)

Decrease excessive itching, watery eyes, runny nose and mucous production. The options listed above are not likely to cause drowsiness. These medications work best when used before exposure to allergen (**i.e. every morning for a few weeks at the beginning of allergy season**). Benadryl is an older Antihistamine which may cause significant drowsiness.

Nasal Corticosteroids: BUDESONIDE (Rhinocort), TRIAMCINOLONE (Nasocort), FLUTICASONE (Flonase)

Nasal sprays which contain a mild steroid to reduce inflammation of the upper airway and alleviate nasal and sinus congestion, and postnasal drip. They work best after being used consistently for a few days. The medication should be stopped if any nasal bleeding occurs.

Expectorants: GUAIFENESIN (MUCINEX)

Used to thin-out and expel extra mucous. This requires extra water intake to be effective.

VapoRub: Ointment with Camphor, Eucalyptus and Menthol (Vick's Vapo-Rub) applied to chest, neck and soles of feet relieve nasal sinus congestion, postnasal drip, sore throat and cough. This product can be topically applied for night time relief and should NOT be swallowed.

Antitussive: DEXTROMETHORPHAN 'DM' (DELSYM)

Suppresses cough reflex in upper airway and alleviates some throat irritation.

Decongestants: PSEUDOEPHEDRINE 'D' (SUDAFED), PHENYLEPHRINE 'PE'

Shrinks blood vessels in nasal passageway, reduces obstruction to airflow through nose, and reduces pressure on sinuses and inner ears. Caution: May increase Blood Pressure, Heart Rate, or cause Agitation and Insomnia. Avoid within 4 hours of bedtime.

Anti-Inflammatory: ACETAMENOPHEN (TYLENOL), IBUPROFEN (ADVIL, MOTRIN), NAPROXEN (ALEVE), ASPIRIN (Bayer, BC)

These medications reduce inflammation and are useful for treating fever, ear pain, sore throat, and headaches. Advil and Motrin should not be used by individuals who have a history of stomach ulcers, intestinal inflammation, or kidney impairment. Tylenol should be avoided by individuals who have a history of any liver problems. **Aspirin should be avoided in children** and in those who bleed easily or have clotting disorders.

Symptoms of a possibly serious infection:

Watch out for fever, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, rashes, or shortness of breath/wheezing and be sure to return to the clinic to get checked out if your symptoms change or persist.

If a fever, or other worrisome symptoms occur, you should avoid work/school until symptoms resolve to prevent worsening of symptoms and possibly infecting others.

If you have Asthma or any other chronic lung condition:

You are at higher risk for developing respiratory tract infections. Keep your rescue inhaler nearby and use it as needed and prior to physical exertion. Be sure to avoid known allergens and irritants as much as possible to prevent flare-ups. Use your daily maintenance inhaler as directed.