

Treating a Cold? Flu? COVID?

So you're feeling miserable. You have a dreaded upper respiratory infection (aka, cold or URI). Antibiotics won't help this. This is viral. Symptoms generally last 3-5 days but can last up to 2-3 weeks. Ugh. So, what can you do?

Good news! There are a number of over the counter medications that can help you feel better while your body fights off and recovers from this virus. I prefer to avoid combination cold medications; instead, pick medications that are targeted to your most annoying symptoms and only use those. This may be a cough or head congestion or a headache. It's different for every virus and every person.

- **Viracid:** This is a product that helps boost your immune system and fight viruses. It contains a lot of things below like elderberry, echinacea, Vit D/C/A, zinc, and lysine. We love it so much, we're offering it 50% off MSRP for our members.
- **Pseudoephedrine.** This is a decongestant and will help nasal congestion. You have to be 18 to buy it (show your ID) and you'll need to ask the pharmacist for it. I recommend the 6-12 hour option (not the 24) because it's a stimulant, making it hard to sleep. Warning: this med can increase your blood pressure and should not be taken if you are on blood pressure medications.
- **Sinus irrigation** (aka Neti-pot or Neti-Rinse). I LOVE THIS! It will be much more comfortable if you use warm water. Please use distilled or water you've boiled for 5 minutes and allowed to cool. It will help physically remove the snot from your sinuses behind your cheeks -> stopping the post nasal drip and that congestion. This can also help decrease your risk of a secondary bacterial sinus infection - you're not leaving a snot-filled environment for the bacteria to grow.
- **Afrin** nasal spray. This is good if you're getting ready to take off/land on a plane or have an important meeting to go to. But, do not use this more than 3 days as it can cause rebound congestion (ie., worse nasal congestion when you stop).
- **Mucinex.** Generic is fine. This is an expectorant and will help loosen/break-up the mucous so it's easier for you to get it out. Drink plenty of water to help thin it too!
- **Nasal steroid spray.** Nasonex or Flonase work great to shrink the snot factories in your nose. These will work best AFTER using that sinus irrigation and do take a few days to work.
- **Cough drops.** I love Ricola – the hot pink bag. Can also use Robitussin, Delsym, or Chestal (a honey-based cough syrup).
- **Umcka.** This homeopathic medicine is an herb and has good studies behind it that it helps decrease cold symptoms. Cold calm is another product I like – and Oscilliococcinum for Flu.
- **Elderberry.** An immune system booster herb. Has great evidence for the FLU, but not for colds.
- **Echinacea.** Has anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, and immune boosting effects. May help reduce your symptoms. Be careful if you have an autoimmune disease or asthma.
- Most importantly, make sure you're getting good rest, eating healthy foods and hydrating well. Please wash your hands frequently and cough into your elbow to help prevent spreading.

Please contact the office if you have been sick for longer than 10 days and not improving, if you have a fever of >101 for over 24hrs, or develop worsening symptoms after a few days of feeling better.