

Treatment (NAET), which combines acupuncture, kinesiology, chiropractic, herbs, and nutrition to desensitize you to foods to which you are allergic. It may take several months to be effective, depending on how many allergens are sensitizing you. (See Appendix A, under “NAET,” and the section on food allergies, for more information.)

Step 6: Take an Appropriate Homeopathic Remedy

If you still have fatigue, I next recommend trying homeopathy, which has been reported to help some people reverse CFS. There are several formulas, so consult a qualified homeopathist for guidance on which remedies will be most beneficial and for proper dosages. You should experience benefits within one to two weeks. (See Appendix A, under “Homeopathy,” for guidance on finding a qualified homeopathist and for further information.)

COLDS AND FLU

Colds and influenza (flu) are infections of the upper respiratory tract. Most colds and all influenza cases are caused by viruses; a few colds are caused by bacteria (such as streptococcus). These contagious infections are spread mostly by skin contact and touching, as well as through the air. Influenza symptoms are more pronounced than cold symptoms (in other words, you are much sicker), and its complications are more severe. Colds are usually self-limited. They last about three days, although cough and congestion can continue for a week or more. Influenza can last longer, and in people who are debilitated or have heart or lung diseases, it can cause pneumonia and death.

Common Symptoms: Colds

- Head and chest congestion
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Dry cough that may occur only at night
- Achiness
- Lethargy
- Chills
- Possible fever

Common Symptoms: Flu

- Higher fever
- Hacking cough
- Weakness
- Aching muscles
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Congestion

What You Need to Know

Because most colds and flu are caused by viruses, they do not require antibiotics unless testing clearly shows evidence of bacterial infection (the rapid antigen test is the most common test used to detect bacteria). If you take antibiotics for a virus, resistance to those antibiotics can eventually occur. Some people who always take antibiotics for a cold may think it is the antibiotic that gets rid of it, but in fact the cold usually goes away in the same period of time without antibiotics, as studies have documented again and again.

Everyone who's debilitated, elderly, or suffering from lung or heart diseases (including asthma), should get flu shots every year because influenza can be deadly for people who are weakened by other health conditions.

General Recommendations

Diet: Avoid milk products, which increase mucus production. Avoid sugar, which competes with vitamin C and decreases immune function. Chicken soup has been proven to help relieve sore throats and runny nose, and I highly recommended it (homemade is best). Eating garlic is also helpful because it helps prevent viruses from invading and damaging your tissues.

Also, drink lots of water, which improves the function of the white blood cells and keeps the respiratory tract moist, thus repelling viruses. Fruit juices containing vitamin C are helpful, but they should be taken undiluted because processed juices contain sugars that retard your white blood cells' ability to fight the infection. Making the juice in a juicer or eating the fruit itself is the best way to obtain the benefits.

Your Balanced Healing Action Plan for Colds and Flu

- If you have been diagnosed with influenza, start with Steps 1 and 9. If it is severe, go to Step 10.
- Do not give aspirin to a child with a cold because it can cause Reye's syndrome, a disease of the liver. Ibuprofen is the best analgesic to reduce fever and achiness. Avoid acetaminophen products (for example, Tylenol) because they can increase mucus. Do not treat low-grade fevers because this actually is a protective mechanism of the body to help fight the infection. For high-grade fevers, call your doctor.
- If you are elderly, **avoid** supplemental vitamin E because it might extend your recovery and increase symptoms.

Step 1: Rest and Drink Plenty of Fluids

Rest and fluids are the major treatments for both colds and flu. They allow your body to heal itself faster. I also recommend using a cool-air humidifier, which can help relieve congestion and loosen mucus. You can buy one in any drug store.

Step 2: Take Nonprescription Expectorants, Anise, or Bromelain to Reduce Mucus

In addition to Step 1, use an expectorant to break up and clear mucus. Many over-the-