

## EIGHT WAYS TO BEAT COLD AND FLU

- 1. EAT AN ANTIVIRAL BREAKFAST:** Researchers found that eating a 1,200-calorie breakfast increased blood levels of gamma interferon, a natural antiviral agent, by 450%! Going hungry caused a decrease of 17%.
- 2. STRIKE BACK ON STRESS:** Exposing yourself to short-term stress—the kind you have some control over—can supercharge your immune system. The body prepares itself for potential harm and activates its immune resources. To use stress as medicine, take on a small extra project at work or help a coworker with a task. It shouldn't take longer than a day or half a day.
- 3. BREW A CUP OF COLD VIRUS KILLER:** Start pumping green tea into your bloodstream at the first sign of a cold and you should be able to stop its attack. It's the difference between staying home for 2 or 3 days, and going to work and just sniffing a bit. Tetley brand was most effective.
- 4. RECHARGE YOUR IMMUNE RESPONSE:** When the amount of sleep you're logging decreases by 40 percent or more (for instance, you sleep 4 hours instead of the usual 7), the effectiveness of your immune system declines by 50 percent. And for the immune system to operate at full strength, you'll need to sleep a straight 8, the amount shown to produce the highest levels of "natural killer cells," which attack viruses.

**5. PLAY PREVENTION D:** People with the highest vitamin D levels in their blood are the least likely to suffer respiratory infections, says a recent study of nearly 7,000 adults in the *British Journal of Nutrition*. Choose vitamin D3, which is more bioavailable than D2.

6. **TAKE A WALK:** Regular exercise can strengthen the body's resistance to colds by stimulating movement of certain immune cells. In research comparing sedentary adults with moderately active adults (those who took 45-minute brisk walks five days a week), Nieman found that walkers caught colds half as often as nonwalkers.

7. **LIE ON YOUR STOMACH:** researchers divided several dozen volunteers into two groups: one received a traditional Swedish massage and another a session of light touch (but no actual massage-therapy techniques). After each 45-minute session, blood samples were taken. The result: The Swedish massage group experienced a significant increase in their lymphocytes—white blood cells that play a large role in protecting the body against disease—and a decrease in their levels of the stress hormones. The light-touch group didn't not.

8. **FIRE UP THE CROCK POT:** Wake Forest University nutritionists say chili contains an arsenal of immunity-boosters. All of the vegetables (including the onions and garlic) offer immune-system-strengthening phytochemicals, but the tomatoes are particularly powerful. In addition to the phytochemical lycopene, tomatoes contain potassium and vitamins A and C. The tofu and beans supply an immunity-boosting isoflavone called daidzein, and the hot sauce will open up your nasal passages to avoid congestion.

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