

Are you prepared for winter? Avoiding viral infections is the best option!

Are you prepared for Winter? Well, firstly our clinically proven supplement NuCell IM, will provide you on a daily basis with a range of nutrients that help support immunity and energy levels in the body, while reducing oxidative stress. Additionally, there are many other ways to shore up your own defences, so you don't succumb to the dreaded lurgy this winter. This article gathers tips and suggestions from experts, like the Common Colds Centre, Cardiff University, as well as our own nutritionists and immunologists.

If you are in contact with other people you are likely to get a cold as the viruses are so common.

However! Infection does not always mean a cold

Most human viral infections produce no disease at all. They are referred to as 'subclinical' (i.e. no symptoms) despite extensive viral replication in the body. The concept that the majority of viral infections pass unnoticed without any signs of disease is known as the 'iceberg concept of infection'; as the severe disease cases we are familiar with when we think of infection, actually only represent the tip of the iceberg.

The Iceberg Concept Of Infection

Severe symptoms (colds)

Mild symptoms (few sneezes etc.)

Infection but no systems

Exposure but no infection



Colds are like an iceberg

The 'iceberg' concept of viral infection describes the general consensus by virologists that most infections in the community do not cause symptoms and pass without notice. Unseen at the very bottom of the iceberg, we have the vast majority of encounters with common cold viruses; in which the virus does not infect the nose but causes only minor symptoms such as short lived throat irritation and a couple of sneezes which are not recognised as a cold.

Try out these tips to reduce the chance of catching a cold this winter.

Hand washing may help

Since cold viruses can be passed from person to person by hand contact or by touching contaminated surfaces such as door handles, you can help prevent infection by washing your hands. Studies have shown that hand washing can reduce the spread of common colds within the family.

Avoid contact with someone at the onset of their cold (sometimes tricky)

In order for the infection to spread, you need to have close and prolonged contact with those who are infected. Be aware that coughing, sneezing or passing on secretions from the nose via your hands, are the most common and highly contagious ways to easily pass on the virus to others – especially in small-contained spaces such as on the bus. You are most infectious when you have the early symptoms of sneezing, runny nose and cough – so always have some tissues with you and remember to use them!

Keep your nose warm!

A new theory that has been put forward to explain the seasonality of colds and flu. This suggests that our noses are colder in winter than summer and that the cooling of the nose lowers resistance to infection. If this theory is correct then covering our nose with a scarf in cold weather could help prevent colds.

Kissing is OK

Close personal contact is necessary for the virus to spread; and the home and school are the places where spread most often occurs. The common cold viruses are not spread by contact such as kissing, but appear to be spread by large particles expelled at close range by coughs and sneezes, and by contaminated fingers that pass the virus to the nose and eye.

Your fingers can easily become contaminated with viruses by simply touching door handles, public telephones, train ticket machines, library computer keyboards, self-service check out screens – anything you need to touch in public places. You may then touch your nose or eye, which can then lead to you infecting yourself. Tears from the eyes drain via a duct into the nasal cavity; and when we touch our eyes with contaminated fingers we pass viruses into the nose!

A handy tip is to carry a small bottle of antibacterial gel in your bag or pocket; use a small drop on your hands after each time you use something such as an ATM. You could be saving yourself from an unpleasant virus!

Get less stressed

Surprisingly, there is much evidence that indicates that the stress of everyday life can influence the susceptibility to infection. It is still not clear how psychological stress affects the immune system but the most likely link appears to be the increase in the release of corticosteroid hormones associated with stress; as corticosteroid hormones are known to decrease resistance to infection.

The increased stresses of modern life, particularly in cities, may be one of the factors predisposing us to the very high incidence of common cold infections in crowded environments.

Keep Fit

'Healthy body, healthy mind'; exercise has been proven to be one of the best ways to de-stress. Regular physical activity sharpens reflexes, stimulates your hormones, improves gut function, promotes refreshing sleep, and helps keep us trim and in a buoyant mood.

We are what we eat!

Eating well is an important part of maintaining good health.

Key aspects to a healthy diet include; eating the right number of calories, avoiding high sugar foods, eating a wide range of foods, reducing reliance on processed foods, staying hydrated, and using food supplements to supply essential nutrients if you are unable to eat everything that a perfectly balanced diet requires. Our specialised food supplement, NuCell IM contains vitamins and nucleotides to support your immune system and ability to deal with the stressful lifestyles. Put through its 'research paces', you can check out our other articles to see how this exceptional product helps people overcome modern stresses which compromise a healthy immune system:

- NuCell featured in Functional Sports Nutrition
- Sporty types – train harder and recover faster

More great tips

Our experts have produced a handy fact sheet 'Keeping Healthy' - with tips for general fitness and how to eat well for your body to build a strong immune system and help fight off winter infections. Click here 'Keeping Healthy' to download this fact sheet.