



COLDS AND FLU

What You Can Do

- 1. DRINK FLUIDS**—your mother was right! Fluids thin your mucus, helping it to flow. Hot drinks and soups are especially effective.
- 2. HUMIDIFY YOUR ENVIRONMENT**—moisture helps. Use the shower, a humidifier, or breathe over a bowl of hot water.
- 3. GET REST**—going to work with a cold isn't necessarily going to make it worse, but keep in mind you are most contagious in the first 48 hours. So stay home if you can.
- 4. HELP YOUR BREATHING**—prop yourself up on pillows.
- 5. COUGH AND BLOW**—blow your nose gently and often, and cough as needed. You want to keep phlegm moving, not suppress it.
- 6. GARGLE**—gargle with salt water to soothe your sore throat. Salt helps sterilize the bacteria in the back of your throat and promotes the healing of inflamed tissues. To make a salt solution, stir ½ teaspoon of salt in a glass of warm water and gargle for 30-60 seconds.
- 7. DON'T TAKE ANTIBIOTICS**—for a cold or the flu unless there's solid medical evidence that you have a secondary bacterial infection. If you are unsure, see your doctor!
- 8. TAKE AN OVER-THE-COUNTER (OTC) REMEDY**—OTC cold and flu remedies can help relieve symptoms, but do nothing to cure the condition or speed its course. Some may even cause side effects or slow down your recovery. Take single-ingredient products only as needed and as directed. Make sure you read the label warnings and don't take something if you are unsure you really need it. When in doubt, check with your doctor or pharmacist first.



Common OTC's And The Symptoms They Relieve

- 6 Acetaminophen**—for aches, pains, and fever.
- 6 Decongestants**—(like Sudafed) can be helpful for daytime congestion.
- 6 Nasal Sprays**—helpful for congestion, but should not be used for more than three to five days.
- 6 Antihistamines**—(like Benedryl or Dimetapp) helpful for nighttime congestion. They can help you breathe if you're having trouble sleeping due to stuffiness.
- 6 Cough Products**—help suppress dry hacking coughs, but use sparingly. It is better to encourage a productive cough with fluids rather than trying to suppress it.
- 6 Other**—salt water gargles, hard candy, and especially lozenges help to soothe and lubricate your throat. These remedies can provide temporary relief. However, if you have a severe sore throat, see your doctor.





Nicotine Dependence

Just How Much Do You Depend On Nicotine?

Knowing how addicted you are to nicotine can help you quit. It can help you decide if you need extra help, such as medicine or support from a program.

Take this test to find out how hooked you are.

Check the box for every "yes" answer:

Do you usually smoke your first cigarette within a half hour after you wake up?

Do you find it hard not to smoke where smoking isn't allowed? (At the library, movie theater, or doctor's office?)

Do you smoke 10 or more cigarettes a day?

Do you smoke 25 or more cigarettes a day?

Do you smoke more during the morning than during the rest of the day?

Do you smoke even when you're sick?

>> How many boxes did you check? _____

The more boxes you checked, the more addicted you are. You'll have to work hard to quit, even if you checked only one box or no boxes at all. You may be very addicted to nicotine if you checked more than three boxes. Medicine can help you quit.

Remember, no matter how hooked you are, you can stop smoking! The key is staying strong and sticking with it.

Modified from Fagerstrom KO, Schneider NG. Measuring nicotine dependence: A review of the Fagerstrom Tolerance Questionnaire. Journal of Behavioral Medicine 1989; 12 (2): 159-182.

When You Really Crave A Cigarette... Remember This

The urge to smoke usually lasts only three to five minutes. Try to wait it out. You can also try these tips:

- ▶ Keep other things around instead of cigarettes.
- ▶ Try carrots, pickles, sunflower seeds, apples, celery, raisins, or sugar-free gum.
- ▶ Wash your hands or the dishes when you want a cigarette very badly. Or take a shower.
- ▶ Learn to relax quickly by taking deep breaths.
- ▶ Take 10 slow, deep breaths and hold the last one.
- ▶ Then breathe out slowly. Relax all of your muscles.
- ▶ Picture a soothing, pleasant scene. Just get away from it all for a moment. Think only about that peaceful image and nothing else.
- ▶ Light incense or a candle instead of a cigarette.
- ▶ Where you are and what is going on can make you crave a cigarette. A change of scene can really help.
- ▶ Go outside, or go to a different room.
- ▶ You can also try changing what you are doing.
- ▶ No matter what, don't think, "Just one won't hurt." It will hurt. It will undo your work so far.

Remember: Trying something to beat the urge is always better than trying nothing.

