



Natural Remedies for the Flu

Safe, Natural Ways to Prevent and Treat Influenza

Influenza or flu, for short, is an infectious disease caused by viruses in the family Orthomyxoviridae. These viruses enter the body via the respiratory membranes, resulting in inflammation, catarrh (excess mucus), chills, fever, headache, muscle aches and coughing (usually dry). The flu can last for up to ten days.

The greatest danger of the flu isn't the flu itself, but secondary bacterial infections that can develop in weakened lung tissue. This can cause pneumonia. The elderly and those with compromised immune systems are the ones who are most at risk.

In a medical description of flu or colds, you will always read that the virus causes problems in susceptible persons. This is simply the acknowledgement that not everyone exposed to a cold or flu virus will come down with the disease. In short, some people will be immune.

Although a lot of people get flu shots to try to build up immunity to the flu, these shots aren't all that effective. Boosting the body's ability to defend itself against viral infections has a much greater chance of success. There are a number of natural remedies that do this. Supplements like Immune Stimulator and Ultimate Echinacea trick the immune system into thinking there is a massive viral attack. Defenses are increased and any potential invading organism is more quickly recognized and eliminated. Think of it as putting out a "red alert" to have your defenses "armed and ready" if any intruder comes around.

In fact, one can think of these substances as "natural vaccines" which boost non-specific immunity. That is, instead of stimulating the immune system to prepare defenses against a single organism (like a vaccine seeks to do), these substances stimulate general defenses against all infections. When colds or flu are "going around," many people simply load up on some of these immune boosters to prevent themselves from getting sick in the first place.

If one does come down with the flu, there are many effective natural remedies that can speed recovery. One of the best herbs for treating colds and flu is elderberry. Both the berries and the flowers of the elder have a long history of effective use in treating acute viral ailments. Modern research suggests that elder inhibits viruses from being able to enter cells, which prevents them from replicating. Two modern formulas featuring elder berries have also been used with great success for acute viral conditions like colds and flu—Elderberry Plus and Elderberry Defense.

Elderberry Defense combines elderberry extract with Echinacea purpurea, royal jelly, and olive leaf. Two capsules can be taken, along with a large glass of water, every two hours at

the first sign of a cold or flu. This should be continued until symptoms improve.

Elderberry Plus is a chewable tablet containing elderberries, reishi mushroom, and astragalus. The chewable nature of this product make it an excellent choice for children. Again, take 1-2 tablets every two hours until symptoms improve.

When there is digestive upset with the flu, ginger can be very beneficial in settling the stomach. Ginger is also an important ingredient in a traditional formula designed specifically to ease symptoms of flu and vomiting—FV. The FV formula contains ginger, goldenseal, capsicum, and licorice. Take 2-4 capsules every hour to ease nausea, fatigue and other flu-related symptoms. Another good formula for the flu containing ginger is HCP-X. This formula is more helpful for flu with a lot of respiratory congestion.

Where flu is accompanied by aches and pains, APS II with White Willow bark can help to ease this discomfort. It contains natural salicylates, which have an anti-inflammatory and analgesic action similar to aspirin. When the flu settles deeply into the muscles and joints and there is that deep sense of muscle ache, one of the best remedies is boneset.

Where there is fever, yarrow should be added to the program. Use two capsules every two hours with plenty of water. Yarrow is one of the very best herbs for reducing fevers. IF-C is another choice for flu with fever or fever and chills. 4 capsules should be taken every two hours until symptoms improve, and then the dose dropped to 4 capsules twice daily.

Any of the above can be enhanced by using Influenza Remedy, a homeopathic formula designed to ease minor symptoms of the flu such as stomach and abdominal pain, body aches, chills, fever, bronchitis, cough and thirst. Take 10-15 drops under the tongue every 10-15 minutes, or as needed, until symptoms improve, then decrease to hourly, then to four times daily until symptoms are relieved.

Where there is a risk of secondary infections High Potency Garlic and Nature's Immune Stimulator can be taken together to help prevent pneumonia from setting in as a complication of the flu. Take 1 tablet of High Potency Garlic and 2 capsules of Immune Stimulator every four hours, along with plenty of fluids.

There are many other natural remedies that can help one prevent or recover from the flu. To help select the remedies that are right for you consult your local herb specialist.

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