

Flu advice

Wrap up, take homeopathic medicine and remember to wash your hands!

There are established commonsense precautions that everyone can take, to try and avoid serious colds or flu.

For example, it is now known that wrapping up well in winter can protect you from colds and that washing your hands is the single most important precaution against spreading viruses and bacteria, but what else can you do?

A homeopath will select the most appropriate set of medicines that most closely match the range of symptoms you are likely to experience which can shorten the duration of your flu and lessen the severity of your suffering.

For example, some patients will say, "when I get a cold or the flu, it always goes to my chest"; others say, "whenever I am ill I want to shut the world out", or "I become very depressed at the end of a cold". These are all pointers for the homeopath, enabling him or her to *individualise* your medicines.

Alternatively you can use the following over-the-counter medicines safely as acute treatments, should the symptoms of flu threaten (take one dose hourly for six hours, then three times a day as required until your symptoms improve or change):

Over the counter medicines for use as acute treatments

You start to feel internally very cold and suddenly pretty unwell – **Aconite 30c**

You have flu with stomach upset, your body is hot but you feel cold; you are better being warm and are mentally restless and anxious – **Arsen alb 30c**

You have a raging hot temperature, a red face and a cold body – **Belladonna 30c**

Everything aches, especially when you move and you want to be left alone in bed with the curtains drawn – **Bryonia 30c**

You are 'wiped out', have no energy, droopy eyelids and are feeling shivers up and down your spine – **Gelsemium 30c**

With the flu you have great sensitivity to noise and touch, are worse for the slightest uncovering: it is as if you have a hangover – **Nux vomica 30c**

You have aching and restlessness, are better moving around, yet worse on continued exertion and much worse in the cold and damp, much better for heat – **Rhus tox 30c**

In later stages of the illness, the medicine may change, for example:

Your head feels congested when you are up and about but is better lying down – **Natrum carb 30c**

Your sinuses are blocked and painful – **Hepar sulph 30c**

You feel very low and the slightest thing can provoke tears – **Pulsatilla 30c**

Alongside homeopathic medicines, you can safely use salt-water as a gargle and/or a nose-spray, to dislodge mucous and ease sore throats, and take Vitamin C (1g/day). In the later stages of your cold or flu, use inhalant oils or friar's balsam to make a steam head-sauna.

It is safe to take conventional medications such as paracetamol and ibuprofen at the same time and it is important that you do not stop any medication which has been prescribed to you. If you are in any doubt, consult your homeopathic doctor or pharmacist.

For severe and/or persistent symptoms, especially uncontrolled high temperature, vomiting and diarrhoea, do not attempt to self-treat - consult your GP or medical homeopath who belongs to the Faculty of Homeopathy. Look through the register on our website at

http://www.britishhomeopathic.org/getting_treatment/find_practitioner/