

# Health and wellbeing fact sheet

## How to keep fit and well this winter!

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### Give your immune system a boost!

- Make sure you eat your five a day! Fruit and vegetables contain vitamins and minerals that really do help to fight and combat illness.
- Add a probiotic or 'bio live' yoghurt or drink to your diet as this helps to promote a healthy immune response to infection.
- Get active! Moderate exercise of at least 30 minutes 5 days a week can boost your immunity.
- Quit Smoking! Immunity will improve after just 30 days of quitting smoking.
- Take Echinacea and ginseng supplements. Recent studies have shown it can boost immunity and reduce the incidence of colds.

### Keep colds at bay!

Viruses can survive up to several hours on surfaces so good hygiene is the most important thing you can do to avoid catching a cold. It is therefore important to:

- Wash your hands thoroughly and regularly!
- Wash surfaces, door handles and wipe telephones regularly.
- Avoid touching your face. It is common for cold viruses to enter via the nose and eyes.
- Use paper tissues instead of cloth handkerchiefs as germs thrive in moist environments! Make sure you throw paper tissues away immediately after use.
- Try gargling with warm water and salt this has shown to ward off a sore throat, as the salt and its contents can help kill off germs and viruses.
- Treat cold symptoms yourself with over-the-counter medications such as: Steam inhalations, decongestants, paracetamol, Ibuprofen or aspirin.

**Remember:** If you work in a safety critical role be sure to check all over-the-counter medications with our service provider either using the '**Chemist on Call**' website or telephone facility.

### Beat the winter blues!

- Exercise and exposure to daylight is a good way to help boost energy levels if you are feeling lethargic during the dark winter period.
- Listen to your body—if you feel slower during the winter then try not to over do it.

### Keep warm and cosy!

- Wear several thin layers of clothing rather than just one thick one because the air trapped between the layers helps to insulate your body.
- Wear a hat - You lose most of your heat from your head.
- Keep your nose covered up! Wear a scarf or balaclava when it's really cold.
- Have plenty of warm meals and hot drinks throughout the day.

For more information [www.nhsdirect.nhs.gov](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.gov) and <http://www.chemist-on-call.com>

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