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## Easy ways to combat cold and flu season

Winter is almost upon us once again. With winter comes the holiday season, some snowfall, a New Year, and, of course, flu season. Few issues have gripped the headlines in recent years than the flu, as more and more strands of the flu appear each year, wreaking havoc on the nation's schools and offices.

Flu shots are often the first line of defense against the flu. But even those who have received a flu shot can still find themselves battling the cold and flu. Adults and children alike spend so much time in the classroom or office that it's hard to make it through the winter without battling some type of illness.

There are ways to combat cold and flu season without missing a beat this winter:

- **Wash your hands:** Germs often spread through our hands, as hands come into daily contact with germs whenever we touch doorknobs, sneeze or cough into our hands. While it might seem simple, washing hands thoroughly is a highly effective means to stopping the spread of germs. It also helps to sneeze or cough into a tissue or handkerchief, or immediately wash hands after sneezing or coughing. In addition, wash hands whenever you arrive at home, school or the office. This can help remove any germs that might have attached themselves to your hands while you were out and about.
- **Work from home:** Parents often find themselves in a bind when their kids inevitably fall victim to the cold or flu during the winter months. This often leads to one parent staying home from work and using a personal day to do so. Even if kids manage to stay healthy through the winter, parents are just as susceptible to cold and flu when they spend the workday in their office or traveling for business.

However, thanks to the Internet, parents of sick children or even just workers hoping to avoid the flu can safeguard themselves from the winter sick season while still getting their work done. Whether you're working from home or even the doctor's waiting room, it's easy to gain fast and convenient access to your own files, programs, network resources, and e-mail in a matter of seconds from any location connected to the Internet. Instead of heading into the office or downloading a bunch of your files onto a laptop, use your computer to work from the comforts of home, while taking care of sick family members, yourself, or just

avoiding the germs that congregate in the nation's office buildings during cold and flu season. Everything on your work computer will be at your fingertips, just as if you were at the office. Best of all, it's so easy to use that no training is needed.

• **Stay hydrated:** Drinking water is highly beneficial at all times of the year, but even more so during cold and flu season. Water flushes your system, including the poisons that might enter the body during cold and flu season. Each individual is different, but doctors often recommend drinking eight eight-ounce glasses of water each day to maintain or achieve optimal health.

• **Get outdoors:** While the weather outside might be chillier, it's still beneficial to get outdoors and breathe some fresh air. Central heating dries the body out, making it more vulnerable to cold and flu viruses. In addition, because few people go outside during the cold weather, germs tend to gather inside before circulating among those who spend ample time indoors. Even if it's cold, bundle up and get outdoors to breathe some fresh air during cold and flu season.



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