

Natural Ways to Beat the Flu

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Each year, in America, it is estimated that 25-50 million cases of the flu are reported. It is an illness that can be life-threatening, with up 40,000 people dying from it each year. When it comes to the flu, your first line of defense is to work on prevention. Not only can herbal and homeopathic remedies help you avoid getting the flu, if you do get sick, they can help alleviate some of the problems associated with the flu. Joyce speaks with Dr. Gary Kaplan of the Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine in McLean, Virginia, about prevention and care for avoiding or minimizing the impact of the flu.



Dr. Gary Kaplan

“Getting the flu has become so common that we often forget just how serious it can be,” explains Dr. Gary Kaplan, founder of The Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine (www.kaplanclinic.com), located in McLean, Va. “In addition to taking preventative steps, there are some really effective antivirals you can take, if you know for sure that you have the flu.”

Prevention is your first line of defense against the flu. Some of the things you can do to help prevent getting the illness include:

- Getting a flu shot. This low-cost vaccination can go a long way toward prevention.
- Washing your hands frequently and thoroughly, to help keep germs at bay.
- Avoid touching your mouth and eyes, which can enable germs to enter your body.
- Get plenty of sleep so that your body’s immune system is in good shape.
- Meditate regularly, which can help boost your immune system.
- Eat a healthy diet, which includes limiting alcohol, sugar and refined carbohydrates.
- Take a multivitamin so you get at least 500 milligrams of Vitamin C daily, as well as trace minerals.
- Get plenty of exercise (outdoors, if possible).
- Stay warm and laugh often. It’s a great time to watch some old comedies under a blanket.

Despite our best efforts to avoid the flu, some of us will still discover that we have it. Because of this, Dr. Kaplan recommends keeping a first aid kit of homeopathic remedies handy.

In addition to antivirals, such as Tamiflu, natural herbal remedies can be helpful in addressing both the flu and a cold. Some of these herbal remedies include:

- Dispel Invasion – helps with sore throat, sneezing, joint pain, and fever.
- Umcka – strengthens the immune system. (although Umcka and Dispel Invasion should not be taken simultaneously)
- Sambucol – boosts the immune system and supports respiratory function.
- Isatis Gold – treats viral and bacterial infections.
- Oscilloccinum – alleviates flu symptoms.
- Gripp-Heel – stimulates the body’s immune system and shortens illness duration.

“Of course, the amounts you take and how you take it will vary, but we are always happy to get people started in the right direction with these remedies,” adds Dr. Kaplan. “The flu may hit, regardless of how much prevention you attempt. But those who work with our physicians find that there are some natural, quick routes to feeling some relief.”

If you have the flu, or find that you have a fever of over 100.5, it is recommended that you seek the advice of a physician. Those interested in details about how to use each of the remedies listed above can find that information by visiting The Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine website at www.kaplanclinic.com.

ABOUT THE KAPLAN CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

Located in McLean, Va., The Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine has been finding solutions for individuals suffering with chronic pain and illness for over 25 years. The Center’s founder Dr. Gary Kaplan is one of only 18 physicians in the country who is a board-certified specialist in Family Medicine and Pain Medicine. A leader and pioneer in the field of integrative medicine, Dr. Kaplan is a Fellow of the American Academy of Medical Acupuncture, a Clinical Associate Professor at Georgetown University School of Medicine, and he has served as a consultant at the National Institutes of Medicine (NIH). The Kaplan Center’s team of physicians, physical therapists, and other health care providers combine the best of conventional medicine with the best alternative practices to address chronic pain and illness and to help individuals attain optimal health for life. To learn more about The Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, visit the website at www.kaplanclinic.com.