



COLD AND FLU SEASON - GET PROTECTED AND NOT INFECTED

In the United States and Canada, flu season typically begins around October and lasts until about March, while cold season begins a little earlier during late August, early September and lasts until March or April. Are you prepared and protected or are you a sitting target waiting to be infected by either a cold or flu virus?



Being unprepared is bad enough. As it turns out, back-to-school (timed exactly with cold season) and the stress-filled holidays (timed exactly with both cold and flu season) can increase your chances of getting infected and sick with a cold or flu. While most people who become infected with a seasonal cold or flu virus can experience uncomfortable symptoms, they will not require medical care or hospitalization and will be on the road to recovery within less than two weeks. However, being sick for 10 days or two weeks can be a miserable experience, depending on the severity of the symptoms and the extent to which the body's immune system is able to attack and deactivate the invading and infectious cold or flu virus. Remember, your immune system is the sentinel of your body protecting you from foreign invaders such as cold and flu viruses.

Definition and Causes of Cold and Flu

Cold and flu/influenza are contagious respiratory illnesses caused by viruses infecting the sinuses, throat or lungs. There are more than 200 different viruses (e.g., rhinovirus, adenovirus, parainfluenza virus, respiratory syncytial virus, enterovirus and coronavirus) causing what is referred to as the "common cold" and its symptoms, with the rhinovirus being the most common. Flu and its symptoms are caused by influenza viruses of which there are three types, Type A, B or C. Allergic diseases affecting the respiratory tract (i.e., nose or throat) and chronic stress can increase the likelihood of becoming infected with cold and flu viruses.

Statistics on Seasonal Cold and Flu

Every year globally seasonal influenza causes an estimated one billion infections, 3-5 million cases of severe illness, along with 290,000-650,000 deaths. The common cold is the primary reason for children being absent from school and adults not being able to report to work, with adults averaging 2-4 colds annually and children suffering from even more colds. Children tend to catch a lot of colds and flu because of their close contact with each other in daycare centers and schools. Women, especially those 20-30 years of age, also tend to catch more colds than men, most likely because of their closer contact with children. Those at greatest risk for developing flu complications include children younger than five years of age, adults 65 years and older, pregnant women and those suffering from medical conditions (e.g., asthma, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other immune compromising conditions, renal disease, morbid obesity), along with nursing home residents and those having limited access to health care and living in poor conditions.

Transmission of Cold and Flu

Cold and flu viruses can be spread from person-to-person when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks transmitting the virus into the air in the form of an infectious aerosol or large droplets loaded with germs, which then enter the body through the nose or mouth. However, direct contact with infectious secretions through touching contaminated environmental surfaces such as telephones, doorknobs, handrails, tabletops and clothing (i.e., fomites/passive vectors – inanimate objects or substances capable of carrying and transmitting infectious microbes from one person to another) and then putting your hands to your nose or mouth will transmit a cold or flu virus. The risk of getting a cold or flu increases when people find themselves in highly populated areas, such as in crowded living conditions and schools.



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Differences Between the Common Cold and Flu

It turns out that flu viruses spread and cause illness around the same time as cold viruses. Coupled with the fact that both cold and flu are respiratory illnesses and share similar symptoms (typically reflective of an upper respiratory infection) it is difficult (and at times nearly impossible) to tell the difference between whether you are sick with a cold or flu based on symptoms alone. However, flu symptoms tend to be generally more severe than the symptoms associated with the common cold and knock people off their feet.

The most common flu symptoms include the following:

- Fever (usually high) and chills
- Headache
- Fatigue/tiredness (often extreme)
- Coughing (dry cough)
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion (i.e., runny or stuffy nose)
- Muscle aches and pains (frequently intense)
- Stomach symptoms (e.g., nausea, vomiting & diarrhea) can occur but tend to affect children more than adults

While not as severe as the flu, the common cold can create a lot of discomfort for people.



Symptoms of the common cold include:

- Sore or scratchy throat
- Runny nose
- Congestion
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Headache
- Muscle aches and fatigue (but not usually as intense when suffering from influenza)
- Loss of appetite

Upper Respiratory Tract Infections

Since they are symptomatic of and inextricably connected to viruses, generally, and cold viruses and influenza viruses, specifically, it is important to understand the etiology, epidemiology and pathology of upper respiratory tract infections (URTIs). Etiologically, there are a number of viruses including the cold and flu viruses in addition to different bacteria that can cause URTIs and a variety of URTI-associated diseases including the common cold and influenza.

Epidemiologically, URTIs are ubiquitous throughout the world and considered to be the most recurrent illness afflicting humans, accounting for an estimated ten million outpatient visits annually. 5 Children suffer from the highest incidence of URTIs (usually from a cold virus/rhinovirus) with 6-8 infections annually, while adults have 2-3 URTIs annually.



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Pathophysiologically, pathogenic agents such as viruses make their way into the upper airway mucosa often by inhalation and result in catarrhal conditions such as congestion and mucus build-up. URTIs specifically affect the nose, sinuses, pharynx, larynx, and large airways and include the conditions of sinusitis (inflammation of nasal sinuses), rhinitis (inflammation of the mucous membrane of the nose), pharyngitis (inflammation of pharynx causing a sore throat), tonsillitis (inflammation of the tonsils) and laryngitis (inflammation of the larynx causing husky voice or loss of the voice). The specific signs and symptoms of acute URTIs include:

- Cough
- Nasal congestion
- Facial pressure
- Malaise
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Myalgias
- Low-grade fever

It is important to note that viral-induced URTIs frequently lead to secondary bacterial infections such as otitis media (i.e., middle ear inflammation or infection) common in children and sinusitis (i.e., nasal infection or inflammation of the lining of the sinuses) common in adults.

An Effective Defense Against Cold and Flu and Associated URTIs

There is no cure for the common cold or flu. Thus, the best defense against contracting the seasonal cold or flu is to practice prevention by keeping the immune system, the sentinel of the body, vital and vigilant against invading cold and flu viruses. In that regard, a safe, effective strategy to help create and sustain a healthy immune system is to take Strauss Naturals' **Cold Storm Drops** and **Travel Bug Drop**. When taken individually, in pairwise combination or all together these herbal formulas serve as an effective defense against seasonal cold or flu by supporting the immune system, while moderating the symptoms associated with cold and flu.

SCIENTIFIC - SUPPORTED BENEFITS OF COLD STORM DROPS AND TRAVEL BUG DROPS

The **Cold Storm Drops** and **Travel Bug Drops** both contain medicinal extracts derived from naturally sourced fresh ground garlic (bulb) using a proprietary extraction method. There is robust body of scientific research showing that garlic extracts (primary ingredients in **Cold Storm Drops** and **Travel Bug Drops**) possess antiviral properties (suppress viral replication and infection), anti-inflammatory properties (moderate over production of inflammation created by immune response to infection), immunomodulatory properties (support immune system by stimulating or suppressing its response to infection), along with the ability to moderate upper respiratory tract symptoms associated with the common cold and flu.

The difference between **Cold Storm Drops** and **Travel Bug Drops** is that the **Travel Bug Drops** contain fresh ground ginger root (rhizome) and ginger extract (rhizome). Ginger described in the literature as an herbal medicine is reported to have anti-inflammatory properties, anti-oxidative properties, anti-viral/bacterial properties in addition to antitussive and decongestive properties all of which can serve to support the immune system and moderate upper respiratory tract symptoms associated with the common cold and flu. Ginger is also reported to effectively treat gastrointestinal issues such as nausea, diarrhea, abdominal discomfort and vomiting. This is important because although the respiratory tract is primary route of transmission of the influenza virus, gastrointestinal symptoms such as loss of appetite, diarrhea, vomiting and abdominal pain are reported as being characteristic of severe influenza, making the **Travel Bug Drops** an essential herbal supplement to take during flu season.

Final Thoughts

The unpredictable and infectious nature of cold and flu viruses, along with their prevalence, ability to mutate and be transmitted throughout the population, underscores the importance of becoming protected and not infected this cold and flu season. By taking Strauss' **Cold Storm Drops**, **Travel Bug Drops** and **Smooth Oregano Drops** you can keep your immune system vital and vigilant, thereby, reducing your chances of getting sick and suffering with the symptoms associated with the common cold and flu. If by chance you have not been taking Strauss' immune-supporting herbal supplements and get sick, it would be prudent to take them to bolster your immune system and moderate the symptoms of an upper respiratory infection and other symptoms associated with the common cold or flu.