



Fit For Sisters

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Columnist

Beat back cold and flu

2018 thus far has seen one nasty winter storm. It's not the snow and ice; it's the cold and flu. This bug has proven to be rampant and persistent throughout the community. Unless you decide to quarantine yourself, the risk of catching this bug is high. There are, however, ways to stay healthy, and to beat the bug.

First, an examination of how the flu is spread: The virus exists in our respiratory and nasal tracts waiting for its moment. A sneeze, a cough, or heavy breathing then expels the virus free to find a new host. It is said contact within six feet of someone is enough distance to catch it person-to-person.

Someone who has recently wiped their nose, or coughed into their hands is ready to lay the virus down on the next thing they touch. Door handles, faucets, etc. are all places these viruses fester. The next person to grab the handle and rub their tired eyes may be infected.

Once the virus is within the body it quickly goes to work. Taking one to four days to show symptoms, the

virus starts in the respiratory tract. The actual cause of symptoms is the body's own immune defense. Starting with aches and fatigue, temps raise and the war has begun. Once the infection has been localized, the body begins to clear out the damage with mucus, sneezing and a runny nose.

The biggest trouble with the flu seems to be the complications. The fallout from the immune system battle opens the back door for pneumonia, and other germs to get into the lungs. Another thing to consider is drying out mucus with over-the-counter medications. This can actually do more damage to the lining of the respiratory tissue, because the mucus functions as a medium to remove and repair the damaged cells.

Another risk is dehydration. On the onset, hydration is key because the immune system needs extra fluids to mobilize the white blood cells to fight the infection. Later, fluids are going to keep mucus moving — again, a good thing. The old wives remedy of brothy hot soup has a bit of truth to it because the warm liquid will help keep the mucus moving. Also, to keep the mucus moving it is important to be upright. A lying-down position doesn't effectively move fluid out of the lungs, therefore delaying recovery.

If you have symptoms of the flu there are some important things to consider regarding diet and exercise. First, intensive exercise should be avoided in the beginning of the illness. The extra stress on the body will only exacerbate the symptoms of fever. Heavy breathing may further damage the cell walls lining the

respiratory areas, causing more irritation. Light exercise or activity should be done as tolerated. This is because a light workout will not stress the body, but it will get fluid moving which may perhaps help the phlegm move out of the lungs. Keep it light and avoid heavy weights as the pressure increases within the body can cause worse headaches.

Diet is another one where there are more wives' tales than anything else — some of which are true. Anti-inflammatory foods like ginger, turmeric, and lemon will help lessen the stress of the body. Foods high in antioxidants may help as well. Hot liquids as stated above will help the mucus exit the body and should also be part of care.

Some supplements, notably zinc, may (according to a few trials) reduce the duration of cold symptoms. Vitamin D is also an immune supporting vitamin that people can be deficient in at this time of year. Vitamin C, which is the star of cold supplements, doesn't have sound science to back its claim.

Sometimes, the flu bug bites hard, and this year seems to have many victims laying in its wake. There are however good ways to miss the flu or manage better.

It is impossible to over-emphasize the importance of sleep. Without adequate sleep you are FAR more likely to be susceptible. Aside from sleep, a whole foods diet of fruits and veggies will also be a surefire way to arm oneself against the flu bug. When all else fails, know that symptoms, when managed correctly, usually subside in a few days.

Science Fair will focus on the outdoors

Outdoor Science: That's the theme for this year's Sisters Science Fair — and it's an apt topic for considering countless outdoor recreation opportunities in Sisters Country. The Science Fair is scheduled for Saturday, March 17, at Sisters High School from noon to 4 p.m.

This community-wide event appeals to people of all ages to stroll through the high school and observe, ask questions and participate in the many hands-on exhibits. Students and adult volunteers will be walking around wearing buttons that say "ASK ME! What? How? Why?"

At the Science Fair, everyone is encouraged to join in the magic of science to learn and have fun.

"Plan to spend plenty of time at the fair looking at and participating in all of the many displays and hands-on experiments from the Sisters schools, community businesses, universities and statewide organizations," said Cal Allen, director of the Sisters Science Fair. "It's amazing and exciting for all ages and especially for families to experience the Science Fair together. We've grown every year because of the increased participation and word-of-mouth enthusiasm shared throughout the community

and beyond. There were over 800 people last year walking throughout the high school making it such an electric event where parents, kids and community members can discover the wonders and importance of science."

Healthy living and green energy programs will have displays, from greenhouse gardening to organic vegetables in the local Seed-To-Table program. The planetarium will be set up and students, teachers, and astronomy volunteers will be on hand to explain the night sky. A 3-D printer will be there to astonish the imagination.

The 2018 Design, Construct, Compete (DCC) Challenge will feature balloon car competitions. Registration forms and rules are available for downloading at the Sisters Science Club website at www.sisters-scienceclub.org.

Rules for the popular Science Fair SciArt contest are also available at the Sisters Science Club website.

The success of the Sisters Science Fair depends on its many volunteers willing to help set up, answer questions and steer visitors in the right direction. For more information contact Barbara Bott at bottb1@gmail.com.

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