

Common cold virus strikes again

Antibiotics are used to fight bacteria and not viruses that cause the common cold

By Megan Turner
Higher Education Reporter

You're sneezing, coughing, wheezing and, if that weren't enough, you have a paper due tomorrow and all you feel like doing is snoozing. You've tried to deny it, but it is starting to become a reality: You've got a cold. Although there isn't a cure for the common cold yet, there are some things you can do to improve the situation.

The upper respiratory infection, also known as a cold, is caused by a virus that is transmitted through direct contact. Colds are, of course, very common: The average adult will suffer about two to four colds a year, mostly during the winter months, although the "cold season" usually begins in the fall.

There are several different viruses that can cause a cold, which is why it has been very difficult for scientists to make a vaccine, said Dr. Donna Scurlock of the Student Health Center.

Generally speaking, however, symptoms of the common cold can last a week, maybe more, depending on a person's immune system. The viruses that cause colds in most people are usually transmitted by air, when a person sneezes or coughs, or by secre-

tions, such as when a person touches a desk and then touches his or her face.

Symptoms may not show for one or two days, but when they do they are numerous: nasal discharge, a sore throat, coughing, headaches, low fever and fatigue are classic symptoms, Scurlock said. Cigarette smokers tend to have much stronger symptoms, and a cold for these people may last longer.

Preventative measures to avoid colds include a healthy diet, low stress levels and regular exercise. Vitamin C and Zinc, which have been associated with cold protection, have brought conflicting results in recent studies. Scurlock said it doesn't hurt to keep taking them if you think they work or if your doctor recommends them.

As for alleviating cold symptoms, Scurlock said there are several options.

"As with anything, when there's not a cure there are more ways to make it better," she said.

Decongestants and antihistamines may help but are not effective for all people. They can help clear nasal passages and relieve headaches, but they may also cause side effects such as drowsiness or excitability. Also, cough drops and cough medicines may reduce coughing and soothe sore throats temporarily; some cough medicines, however, contain alcohol and can cause drowsiness. In other words, they shouldn't be

taken if someone has a really big paper to write.

Antibiotics, such as penicillin, are an emphatic no, Scurlock said. Bacteria are the prime targets for antibiotics, not viruses; hence, antibiotics are not useful in combating the common cold. She said many doctors have been unnecessarily prescribing antibiotics for people without bacterial infections. As a result, some patients have developed an immunity to antibiotics and are unable to use antibiotics if faced with an actual bacterial infection.

According to an article by the Division of General Internal Medicine, 12 million antibiotic prescriptions, or 20 percent overall, were given to patients with viral infections.

You should only see a doctor when you have any of these symptoms: a significantly high fever; unusually thick nasal drainage; breathing difficulties; blood produced by coughing; or symptoms that continue to worsen after a week, Scurlock said.

Scurlock said she recommends self-care, or treating the cold without over-the-counter medications or prescriptions. She said by listening to your body and doing what it says, a cold isn't likely to hang around as long. Sleep when drowsy, drink lots of liquids, eat well and don't go to class if you don't feel well enough. After all, no one else wants to get sick.

A CALL FOR PROJECTS

Asia in Focus:

Undergraduate Perspective

What is it: A conference for undergraduate students with an interest in Asia. Students will present and share projects involving things like research papers, reading creative writing, displaying a visual arts project, or demonstrating Asian music, dance or martial arts. The conference is FREE with travel and food provided.

The conference will be held on Saturday, November 15, 1997 from 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., at Lewis & Clark College, plus an evening world music performance. It will also include video previews and job and internship information.

To join: submit a one-page abstract (short description) of what you would like to present to The Center for Asian and Pacific Studies (CAPS), 110 Gerlinger Hall, University of Oregon.

If you have any questions, please contact
Anne Mauboussin at 346-1522 or amaub@oregon.uoregon.edu
The proposal deadline is Wednesday, October 15, by 5:00 p.m. at CAPS.

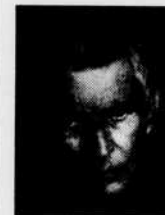
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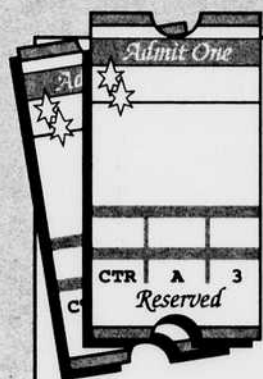
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EMU NEWS



EMU Ticket Office

FEATURE EVENTS FOR THE WEEK ARE:

Calobo

October 21, EMU Ballroom

Jars of Clay

October 18, Hult Center

Eugene Ballet's Romeo and Juliet

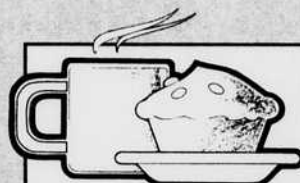
October 25-26, Hult Center

DJ Spooky

October 15, W.O.W. Hall

Open Monday-Friday 8-7:30
Sunday 12-4, Saturday 10-4

The EMU Ticket Office is an outlet for Fastixx, Hult Center, W.O.W. Hall, EMU and UO Athletic tickets.



1/2 price

pastries after 2:30pm

in the EMU Food Service Locations
beginning Monday, October 13th

EMU Food Service Customer Appreciation Day.

Thanks for bearing with us during our remodeling. Coupons drawings, free gifts at all EMU Food Service Locations.



BIRD Identification Walk

Is it a Hawk? ...Turkey? ...Vulture???

Knowing local birds and their songs greatly enhances awareness and enjoyment of hiking and being outdoors. Join UO Ornithology Instructor, Dan Gleason, for a morning walk at Fern Ridge to learn how to identify some of our local wild bird population.

Preregistration required. Transportation provided.
Bring binoculars!

Free for UO students and Co-op members; \$2 general public.
Saturday, 7:00am-10:00am, Meet at the OP

HIKING Southern Oregon

Local Author, William Sullivan, proves there's more to Southern Oregon adventure than just Crater Lake and the Rogue River. Discover hot springs near Roseburg, wildflower meccas near Ashland, secret lakes in the Trinity Alps, and much more! Sullivan is the author of six books about exploring Oregon, and always put on an entertaining show full of great adventure tips and natural history anecdotes.

\$1 general admission; free to students and OP Co-op members. Wednesday, 7:30pm.
110 Willamette Hall

