

Beating the Boston Winter Blues

The Flu & Other Contagious Diseases

STATISTICS

Every year in the United States, on average:

- 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu;
- More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications; and
- About 36,000 people die from flu.
- Infectious diseases cost the U.S. \$120 billion a year.
- More than 160,000 people in the U.S. die yearly from an infectious disease.

SYMPTOMS

- fever (usually high)
- headache
- extreme tiredness
- dry cough
- sore throat
- runny or stuffy nose
- muscle aches

For more information, see www.cdc.gov/flu

HOW FLU SPREADS

PERSON TO PERSON

The main way that influenza viruses are spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air and deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Influenza viruses may also be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own mouth or nose before washing their hands.

THE FLU IS CONTAGIOUS

Most healthy adults may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5 days after becoming sick. Symptoms start one to four days after the virus enters the body. That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick. Some persons can be infected with the flu virus but have no symptoms. During this time, those persons can still spread the virus to others.

GOOD HEALTH HABITS FOR PREVENTION

The single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated each year.

1. Avoid close contact.
2. Stay home when you are sick.
3. Cover your mouth and nose.
4. Wash your hands with soap and hot water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
5. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
6. Practice other good health habits →

OTHER GOOD HEALTH HABITS

- a. Get plenty of sleep
- b. be physically active
- c. manage your stress
- d. drink plenty of fluids
- e. eat nutritious food.

Nutrition

Grains	Vegetables	Fruits	Milk	Meat & Beans
At least half of your grains should be whole grains. Simply saying wheat is not enough, it must be "whole wheat." Watch the sodium, ask for sodium free bread.	Eat more dark-green veggies Eat a variety of vegetables in a variety of colors	Eat a variety of fruit in a variety of colors Limit fruit juices	Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy products Make sure to get your 100% daily value of calcium each and every day.	Choose low-fat or lean meats Avoid fried foods Egg whites and chicken are the best sources of protein, but be sure to vary your protein
For a 2,000 calorie diet, you need the amount below from each food group: 6 oz - 6 slices bread or 3 cups pasta	2.5 cups	2 cups	For more information, go to MyPyramid.gov 3 cups	5.5oz - 2 decks of cards meat or 5.5 eggs

Energy & Nutrition

- Carbohydrates provide the most immediate energy, but that energy lasts about 2 hours.
- Protein can provide energy for about 3 hours, but it doesn't kick in as quickly.
- Fats provide energy for 3-4 hours, but take longer to kick in.
- Caffeinated beverages will keep you awake for up to 4 hours, so if you only need 2 more hours of studying before going to bed, fruit juice may be a better choice than caffeine.

Limit fats, salt, and sugars.

- Try to get 20-30% of your calories from fat, but *no more than 10% from saturated & trans fat*. Minimize trans fat as much as possible.
- Make most of your fat sources from fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.
- Limit solid fats like butter, margarine, shortening, and lard, as well as foods that contain these.
- Check the Nutrition Facts label to keep saturated fats, trans fats, and sodium low.
- Choose food and beverages low in added sugars. Added sugars contribute calories with few, if any, nutrients.

Determining Your Caloric Needs:

Age	Sedentary	Moderate	Active
Males			
18	2400	2800	3200
19	2600	2800	3000
21-25	2400	2800	3000
Females			
18	1800	2000	2400
19-20	2000	2200	2400
21-25	2000	2200	2400

Alcohol

SIGNS THAT YOU NEED HELP

- Blacking out
- Drinking in the morning
- Feeling of guilt about drinking
- Trembling hands (the shakes)
- Seizures
- Trying to hide how much you drink
- Driving Tickets
- Criticism from friends or family
- Having big personality changes when drinking
- Poor work performance
- Planning activities around drinking
- Insomnia
- Social withdrawal or change in friends

Other Drugs

SIGNS THAT YOU NEED HELP

- Major changes in sleeping and eating habits
- Poor work or school performance
- Aggressive or abusive behavior
- Chronic red eyes
- Social withdrawal
- Stealing or lying
- Poor relationship
- Poor personal hygiene

WAYS TO GET MORE SLEEP

- Exercise in the morning or afternoon instead of at night. Also avoid activities like computers or TV that involve LCDs shortly before bed.
- Get to sleep on a regular schedule by setting a goal to get to sleep by a specific time every night.
- If you need to nap during the day, take a 20 minute power nap. Napping for long periods of time will throw off your body's internal clock.
- Use your bed for sleeping only so your body knows it is a place for sleep.
- If your body is telling you it needs to sleep, but you have studying you must get done before class the next morning, set your alarm for something in the middle of the night, like 3am, and finish studying then. Getting the rest before studying will allow you to retain the information better, and also study quicker so you can get back to sleep sooner and ultimately spend more time sleeping. Try setting the alarm clock on your iPod and using headphones to avoid waking your roommate.

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PREVENTION

Be aware of the early signs of possible alcohol abuse.

Drink only in moderation. Drink no more than two alcoholic beverages a day and try to limit yourself to less than seven drinks per week.

Avoid stress and learn ways to deal with stress, anxiety, and depression other than drinking alcohol

If you have a strong family history of alcoholism, do not drink alcohol.

TREATMENT

If you think you have a drinking problem, seek professional help. Attempting to go "cold-turkey" can be very dangerous in a person that has alcohol dependence
Commit to quitting.

Contact AA - a self-help group dedicated to helping people stop drinking – at www.AA.org

Ask your family and friends for support

PREVENTION

Be aware of the possible signs of drug abuse. Intervening early can greatly help in the success rate of quitting

Avoid drugs of abuse while taking other medications. There can be serious and even deadly interactions between certain drugs

Educate your friends about the consequences of drug abuse

TREATMENT

Commit to quitting. This may be one of the most difficult things you do in your life. Once you decide to quit, develop a plan to make it happen

Ask your physician for help. Withdrawal from certain drugs can be very dangerous to your health. You may need a physician to help with the process and prescribe medications.

You will need lots of help. Gain support from family, friends, and your physician. You will need counseling to help with your addiction.

HOW TO QUIT SMOKING

BEFORE YOU QUIT

Set a quit date 1-2 weeks from now. It takes a while to plan to quit.

Gather support from family, friends, and co-workers. Let them know that you plan to quit and tell them your quit date. Their support and encouragement can be invaluable.

Talk to your healthcare provider. They will be able to walk through the process with you. They can be a source of information. They may also prescribe medication to help you.

Make a plan for the times you will get urges to smoke. For example, chew gum, drink a glass of water, take a hot bath, or go for a walk.

QUIT DAY

On the day you quit get rid of all cigarettes, ash trays, matches, and lighters

AFTER YOU QUIT

Be prepared for withdrawal symptoms. You may feel edgy, and have trouble concentrating. The symptoms are the strongest in the first few days, but may last up to 3-4 weeks.

Have healthy snacks around you. Part of the addiction to cigarettes is having something in your mouth. When people quit they tend to eat more. Most people will gain a few pounds. Try eating fruits and vegetables and drinking more water.

Start an exercise program. This is the perfect opportunity to really impact your health. It can also keep your mind off of smoking.

Don't be discouraged if you fail. Most people quit on average 4 to 5 times in their life before they are ultimately successful. Keep Trying!