

# HEALTH MATTERS

## NATURAL PATHS TO HEALTHIER LIVING

THE GEORGETOWN NATUROPATHIC WELLNESS CENTRE FALL 2009

## INFLUENZA - THE REAL STORY!

The fall is fast approaching. The temperature is changing and one can see the leaves are turning colour and the children are back at school. This year, we have been overwhelmed with information regarding the influenza virus H1N1 (swine flu) and its impact on our global health system. This newsletter aims to clarify information about the seasonal flu, the H1N1 strain (swine flu) and most importantly, how to protect yourself and your family.

The flu refers to influenza, which is a contagious respiratory illness caused by various strains of the influenza virus. The influenza virus is classified into 3 types – A, B, C, with the A type being the most prevalent in humans. These types are further divided into two subtypes named for the specific protein on the surface either hemagglutinin (H) and neurominidase (N). All the viruses contain both the H and N protein, however, these proteins can mix in any number of combinations (there are 16 H and 9 N proteins). It is from these proteins that we name the viruses like the H1N1 (swine flu). Viruses can recombine with other influenza viruses and mutate.

Just to be clear, the H1N1 flu (swine flu) is still just another flu virus resulting in similar symptoms like the seasonal flu. The H1N1 flu is a recombination of an avian, swine and human influenza virus. Research by the National Institute of Health (NIH) has shown that this virus will most likely not recombine with the seasonal flu which is good news since this could have made it more virulent and deadly. One reason that we are talking more about this flu season is because the H1N1 virus seems to target school

age children, those with pre-existing medical conditions, pregnant women, young adults and Aboriginal communities. Unlike the seasonal flu that affects the elderly and the very young more often.

All flu viruses have the ability to mutate and change either to become more or less virulent. The time to take to mutate can be very quick (as seen with the H1N1 virus) or can be slower. This fact makes it very difficult to produce a vaccine that is totally effective. We have no specific way of forecasting these changes. Therefore, the best way to manage new and emerging influenza viruses is to prevent exposure and to optimize the immune system.

### **PREVENTION**

The following tips will be effective in fighting both the influenza and the cold viruses.

**Hygiene:** This is very basic but probably the single best way to limit the spread of the flu virus. Washing hands thoroughly with soap and/or alcohol is very effective at inactivating influenza viruses. Covering the nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing reduces influenza transmission. As well, use common sense and stay home from work or school if sick with the flu.

**Good personal health:** This includes proper sleep, lots of fluids, getting outside for time in the sun, reduce stress, eating properly – lots of fruit and veggies and avoiding processed foods and sugar.

**Maximize your Immune System:** Use the Homeopathic Flu Prevention Kit. As well, there are some specific supplements that can optimize the immune system. I have listed my favorites that will deal with the upcoming flu season, however, by no means is this an exhaustive list.

Dr. Cathy's list to support the immune system this winter:

Adults:

1. **Homeopathic Flu Prevention Kit**
2. **Immucore:** medicinal mushrooms, zinc, Vit C and selenium are all antiviral
3. **Acidophilus:** to improve gut immunity. 70% of the immune system resides in the gut
4. **Vit D:** new research suggests that Vit D protects the mucosa, therefore viruses can not gain hold and replicate
5. **A.C.E.S. + Zinc:** antiviral

Children:

1. **Homeopathic Flu Prevention Kit.**
2. **Chewable Vit C:** helps the white blood cells fight off all viruses and bacteria
3. **Liquid Astragalus Combo:** a potent antiviral
4. **Powder Acidophilus:** improves the immune system in the gut.
5. **Chewable or Powder Mult-Vitamin:** to ensure overall nutrition especially for those picky eaters
6. **Vit D:** research suggests with our long winters, we may be deficient in Vit D which can make us susceptible to seasonal viruses

If you develop the flu, follow the instructions in the Homeopathic Flu Kit. If symptoms persist, please call. We utilize homeopathic injectables specific for the influenza virus as well as high doses of Vitamin A which is an excellent antiviral agent.

**WE WISH YOU WELL!!**

With the coming of fall there is always change which we have experienced at the Georgetown Naturopathic Wellness Centre. Dr. Nicole Meier who has been with our clinic for over 6 years has recently left to start her own clinic. I would like to take this opportunity to wish her well with her new clinic and her new adventure. I will miss Dr. Meier and the interesting discussions on the more difficult cases. We will stay in close contact as we will oversee each other's patients as needed for vacations.

**GOOD LUCK!**

***How to Bust a Cold!***

Start at first sign of cold symptoms

| For Adults   | For Kids                                       |
|--|--|
| Oil of Oreganol caps<br>Extra Vit C<br>Zinc lozenges | Vita Kids Immune<br>Extra Vit C<br>Ferrum phos |

Please visit us at the office for the specifics on dosage and duration of supplements for both Cold and Flu Prevention.

***FLU OR JUST THE COMMON COLD?***

| Symptoms             | Cold   | Seasonal flu/H1N1   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| Fever                | None or low  | Almost always high, sudden  |
| Chills               | Rare   | Almost always   |
| Headache             | Absent or mild   | Common  |
| Muscle Ache          | Absent or mild   | Common, often severe  |
| Fatigue/weakness     | Absent or mild   | Often extreme, may linger   |
| Cough                | Sometimes with runny nose  | Common, may be severe   |
| Stuffy nose          | Common   | Common  |
| Sore throat          | Common   | Common, not extreme   |
| Sneezing             | Common   | Not often   |
| <b>Complications</b> | Sinus congestion, earache, bronchitis, may trigger asthma in those prone | Pneumonia, bronchitis, exacerbation of heart, lung and other chronic health disorders |

REMEMBER!! Understand the difference between symptoms of a cold virus and symptoms of a flu virus. These two viruses are handled differently at onset of symptoms

Yours in good health

Cathy Kuindersma, B.Sc., N.D.  
 The Georgetown Naturopathic Wellness Centre  
 16 Mountainview Road S.  
 Georgetown, ON L7G 4K1  
 Tel: 905 873 2361  
 Fax: 905 873 8158

