

Preventing Colds and Flu's This Holiday Season

With the weather cooling and the holiday food on the way, it's a great time to take a moment to prepare our minds and bodies for the winter cold and flu season. The combination of cold weather and lots of sweet and rich holiday food is a flu bugs' dream come true. With our defenses down, the rest of our body looks like a nice warm home to a lonely virus or bacteria.

All that extra holiday food takes a lot of energy to digest and detoxify leaving less energy for fighting those winter bugs. Consider taking smaller first portions and take a moment to ask your body if you really want seconds. Take time to chew your food completely, 20 chews per bite is sufficient.

Before you pick up that sweet treat, remember that feeds bacteria and yeast, and depletes the body of critical vitamins. One tablespoon of sugar slows the immune cells for a full hour. Refined (white) flour, rampant in our day to day diet, is even worse during the holiday dessert and fun-food frenzy. Refined flour (not whole wheat) has lost much of its nutrient value and our body will use up its own stores leaving fewer nutrients available for our immune system.

Each time you choose a caffeinated or alcoholic drink (diuretics), have a glass of water to balance it out. You'll need at least 48 ounces of water each day. Too little water and the mucous linings of our upper respiratory system dry out, making them more susceptible to attack from bacteria and viruses. To make matters worse, all the hot dry air from our heaters and fireplaces dry us out even further.

Take a moment before each day or each party to consider what's important to you and what you can do to prevent illness. Consider the foods and situations you will encounter and create a plan that will support the health of your body while allowing you the joyful experience you so richly deserve.

Have a happy and healthy holiday season.

Dr. Rick

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