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DID YOU GET SICK OVER THE HOLIDAYS AGAIN?

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It happens whenever you take time off. If the holiday flu struck you over the treasured Christmas period, here are 16 ways to prevent it happening again - and minimising sick time if you do get hit!

1. Feast on fish

"When your body is inflamed, it prevents the immune system from doing its job and increases your susceptibility to colds and flus," says nutritionist Caitlin Reid. "Atlantic salmon is rich in healthy omega-3 fats that fight inflammation so add to meals at least a couple of times a week."

2. Steam out the sniffles

Create your own home vaporiser. Fill a bowl with hot water, add a few drops of eucalyptus oil then place a towel over your head, inhaling the steam. The eucalyptus oil acts as a natural remedy that decongests phlegm due to its antibacterial, antiviral and anti-inflammatory properties.

3. Learn to meditate

Meditation not only calms the mind, but the immune system too. Nikki Jankelowitz of [Centred Meditation](#) says getting into a regular routine (even just a few minutes a day) increases our body's ability to fight off bugs by decreasing stress hormones and kicking our immune system back into gear. Download Headspace for quick, 10-minute a day sessions to get started.

4. Gamish with garlic

Indulge in as much Italian as your heart desires - as long as it's got garlic. Nutritionist Lola Berry recommends seeking comfort in homemade garlic bread. "Source gluten-free toast, spread with butter, add lots of raw garlic and parsley (to counteract garlic breath) and you've got a healthy immune boosting garlic bread!"

5. Put your feet up

...literally. Restorative yoga improves immune function, sleep quality and lower stress, says Aly Clarke, yoga teacher at [BodyMindLife](#). Sydney. Try 'Legs-up-the-wall' pose - find a wall space, fold a blanket into thirds and place it under you, then lie back and swing both legs up the wall, letting arms fall out to the side. "Elevating your feet above your head gives blood circulation a gentle boost, stimulating white blood cell activity needed for healing and restoration," says Clarke.

6. Source local superfoods

Skip vitamin C and go straight for Gubinge instead. Also known as the Kakadu Plum, Gubinge is an indigenous superfood proven to have the highest natural source of Vitamin C on the planet. Naturopath Anthia Koullouros recommends having one teaspoon in water, three times per day. Available from Loving Earth, \$29.90.

7. Book in 'me' time

Schedule in a massage and stick with it - no exceptions. "When people get sick it's because they're used to running on high, so as the holiday season begins, unwind by making time for you," says Berry. "A lymphatic drainage massage will help to stimulate the immune system."

8. Up H2O levels

"Dehydration can often leave you predisposed to illness," says kinesiologist Kate Wood. "Aim to drink 35-43ml water per kilogram, per day." Or increase fluids with a hot blackcurrant juice. Cardiff University found it can immediately ease everything from a runny nose, cough, sneezing, sore throat and tiredness.

9. Go loco for cocoa

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Give cartoned coconut water a miss and opt for the milk instead. "Coconut milk contains lauric acid, a medium chain fatty acid that's easily absorbed by the brain," says 'The Healthy Cook' Dan Churchill. "So in times of sickness when your noggin needs to be thinking clearly, it allows your body to send efficient messages back and forth to the cells required in the immune process."

110. ~~Test out TBM~~

TBM - aka total body modification is a kinesiology technique that works on the nervous system by removing blockages and allowing the body to heal itself from immune, mood, sleep or stress conditions. Book in to give your body a boost in the right direction or to balance sugar metabolism. "It's particularly beneficial to those stressed or addicted to caffeine or sugar," says Wood.

111. ~~Load up on zinc~~

Echinacea may get the rep as ultimate flu-fighter, but dosing up on zinc could be just as beneficial. A study from Wayne State University School of Medicine found those who consume zinc lozenges (containing acetate) can half the duration of their cold. For an effective result, take 75mg each day within the first 24 hours of a cold forming.

112. ~~Try a turmeric tonic~~

Fire up taste buds with a turmeric tonic. "The golden root contains anti-inflammatory properties and fights off free radicals which can damage the immune system," says Churchill. To make the Healthy Chef's 'Golden Goodness' tonic - add 1 cup coconut milk, 1 cup almond milk, 1 cinnamon stick, 2 tsp turmeric, 2 cardamom pods, 1 tsp ginger, a squeeze of lime juice and 2 chopped dates to a saucepan on low heat. Once warm, pass through a sieve and serve.

113. ~~Pad out the pillows~~

Don't sacrifice a good night's sleep. Survive a stuffy nose by propping yourself up in bed. Just adding one extra pillow under your head will help you breathe easier, relieving nasal passages and letting mucus drain naturally - as well as easing any sinus pressure building in your ears.

114. ~~Follow the rainbow~~

Fuel up on colourful foods like red capsicum, strawberries, leafy vegetables, citrus and broccoli. "They're packed with vitamin C and will reduce the severity of a cold," says naturopath Meg Thompson. Capsicum also contains carotenoids, vitamin E and twice the amount of vitamin C, so pepper meals to up white blood cells and strengthen immunity.

115. ~~Breathe easy~~

Beat a blocked nose with ancient yogi apparatus - the neti pot. "It works to rinse debris or mucus from your nasal cavity," says Clark. "Add a ¼ teaspoon of salt and a cup of warm water into the pot, stand over a sink, tipping your head to the side and inserting the spout into the upper nostril. Allow the water to flow into your nose and drain from the other nostril." Repeat on the other side.

116. ~~Sip on bone broth~~

Bored of chicken soup? Brew beef bone broth instead. "The gelatin, minerals, cartilage and marrow help to heal and restore the body," says Koullouros. For an added hit, add lemon (rich in Vitamin C), garlic (antimicrobial) and ginger root (for nausea and digestive upsets). Aim to drink three cups before each meal.



The awesome person who wrote this...

[Sam Bailey](#)

Sam Bailey is a Sydney-based journalist whose passion for health and fitness and has seen her write across health titles including Women's Fitness, Women's Health, Body + Soul and Daily Mail Australia. In her down time you can find her sipping green smoothies, attempting complex yoga poses and soaking up vitamin D on Bondi beach.

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