

A CURE FOR THE COMMON COLD?

The average person comes down with three colds a year, each lasting for about nine days. There is still no cure but the following advice may help. Take time off work, because your body will fight off the cold virus better if it is well rested. However, if you have to work, avoid close contact with your co-workers as the virus is contagious. Wash your hands frequently or use an alcohol-based disinfectant gel. Non-sedating allergy medications, which you can buy from a chemist, can decrease drowsiness and also alleviate the problems of a runny nose, watery eyes and blocked sinuses. As soon as you feel a cold coming on, boost your fluid intake. Water or juice is ideal but hot herbal teas with lemon will help thin mucus and expel it from the body. A warm gargle with salt water will relieve a scratchy throat by reducing inflammation and clearing mucus and irritants. It also flushes out bacteria and viruses so it can be used as a preventative measure as well. The warm moisture generated by a hot shower or bath will soothe and clear nasal passages. Inhaling steam over a bowl of hot water relieves congested sinuses, too. For a tickly cough, the latest research suggests that honey, either straight from the jar or dissolved in a hot drink, works as well if not better than costly lozenges and sprays. A good diet is essential for a quick recovery, so start the day with a healthy breakfast including vitamin C in the form of fresh fruit or berries. For lunch, chicken soup is good, but be sure to add chunks of lean chicken meat, for protein helps build immune cells. Not only is this the perfect comfort food but it has been proven to be medicinally beneficial. For dinner, a spicy curry makes a good decongestant and some ingredients (ginger, garlic, chilli) are recognised as being anti-viral and anti-bacterial. A little light exercise is beneficial, as this will enhance your emotional wellbeing, but don't attempt anything too strenuous. Finally, to recharge your body and regain your strength, you need a full eight hours' sleep.

TASK: Complete the summary below. Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the text for each answer.

People usually get three colds every year. When sick, it is good to stay away from work because you need rest and you could spread the illness to 1 Reduce 2 and cold symptoms by using medicines that you can buy from a pharmacy. Drink a lot and gargle with salt water to help clear your throat. Gargling with salt water is a good 3 to keep you safe from future illness, too. Steam helps clear the nose and 4 , instead of expensive medicine, is good for a cough. Take lots of vitamin C. Chicken soup is healthy and it is ideal 5 , as well as having curative properties. In the evening, a meal of hot curry will clear the airways. This also has 6 that can neutralise harmful bacteria and viruses. Some kind of 7 is a good idea to improve your mood and sleep will help you to get better.