Flu Fighters

The flu season hit early this year, unfortunately, that does not mean that it will end early—medical forecasters believe it will likely last until April. However, if you are one of the fortunate souls who have not yet experienced this year’s flu, keep up the good fight and continue to arm yourself with some of the effective tactics suggested here for preventing the flu.

GET A FLU SHOT

CBN News reporter, Lorie Johnson, reports that according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the best prevention against getting the flu is a flu shot. It’s still not too late to get one, but in some locals, it may be more difficult to find. Johnson reminds viewers, “The shot won’t give you the flu because the virus used in the vaccine dies during the manufacturing process. It takes about two weeks for the vaccine to fully protect you, so you could still get the flu during that time.”

You could also get the flu after getting a flu shot because the shot may not stop the type of flu strain you are exposed to. Johnson explains why: “The vaccine requires a long incubation process so drug makers must predict which strains they need to prepare for, months before the next flu season.” This year’s vaccine is about 60 percent effective against the various types of flu circulating today. Individuals must decide for themselves whether or not to get a flu shot.

WASH YOUR HANDS

While doctors tout the vaccine as the best flu prevention, there are other ways. Topping that list: washing your hands. But you have to do it right. Johnson instructs viewers: “Get a good lather going and keep it going to 20 seconds, about as long as it takes to sing the ‘Happy Birthday’ song twice. Rinse really well and dry with a clean towel. If there’s no soap and water handy, hand sanitizers are a good substitute, just make sure it contains at least 60 percent alcohol and rub till your hands are dry.”

DISINFECT

Your hands aren’t the only source of flu that needs special attention. The flu virus can live on a hard surface for up to 2 days!
Regularly disinfect all those surfaces and items you touch on a daily basis like: door knobs, remote controls, refrigerator handles, kitchen and bathroom sinks’ faucets, car steering wheel, desktop surfaces, computer keyboards, mice and other electronics’ surfaces.

NEWSMAXHEALTH.COM reports that AT&T’s chief medical officer is warning that cell phones can spread the flu. How? Cell phones regularly come in contact with your face and mouth. Your hands frequently touch potentially flu-contaminated surfaces such as doorknobs, railings, shopping carts, and others’ hands when shaking hands. It is unlikely that before you answer that next urgent call, you will wash or disinfect your hands. Make it a regular—even daily-habit to disinfect your cell phone to prevent contamination.

**STRENGTHEN YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM**

Johnson says, “Our bodies are designed to fight-off the flu naturally. The catch is, you have to strengthen your immune system. That requires discipline and remembering your ‘dos and don’ts.’”

**DO:**

- GET AT LEAST 8 HOURS OF SLEEP.
- DRINK LOTS OF WATER.
- EAT NUTRITIONAL FOODS.
- TAKE SUPPLEMENTS: including fish oil, vitamin C, and especially vitamin D.
- TRY THE NATURAL ANTIBIOTIC, VIRGIN COCONUT OIL. One tablespoon in the morning and at night should help. It can be taken straight out of the container, warmed until liquid, or mixed into foods. Dr. Beverly Teter, lipid biochemist at University of Maryland, explains, “The coconut oil tends to keep the bacteria down so that if you’re assaulted with a virus your immune system can concentrate on the virus—it doesn’t have to concentrate on 27 other bacteria that day.”
- REDUCE YOUR STRESS LEVEL. Stress can cause inflammation which weakens your immune system. So keep it low with prayer and exercise.

**DON’T:**

- Eat food loaded with sugar or trans fats. They too can cause inflammation and weaken your immune system.
- Avoid reading potentially contaminated magazines or books in the doctor’s office or emergency room.
- Don’t use pens available to the general public at grocery or pharmacy check-out lanes—carry and use your own pen to avoid picking up unwanted contaminants.

CBN News reporter, Lorie Johnson, sums it up this way:

“So, avoid the flu by getting the vaccine, keeping yourself and your environment clean, and your body strong.”

**Fact Resources:**

Material found in this edition of A Closer Look is taken from the CBN News report on the flu by Lorie Johnson that first aired January 29, 2013 unless noted otherwise.

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**Note:** Before beginning any new health regimen, it is important to consult your family physician or health care professional first. The information given in this issue of A Closer Look is for your consideration. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Before starting or stopping any exercise routine or nutritional supplementation, please consult your family physician or health care professional about any contraindications that would make doing so advisable.

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