



COLD & FLU SEASON



Colds and flu can reach epidemic proportions during winter. Every year in the United States, 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu, according to the Centers for Disease Control, and more than 200,000 are hospitalized from flu complications. There are more than 108 million flu cases

annually, and more than 62 million cases of the common cold!

And this year the U.S. is experiencing a flu vaccine shortage. Accusations are flying regarding responsibility for this year's flu vaccine shortage.

The crisis erupted when it was learned that half the U.S. vaccine supply for this winter--47 million doses--was **tainted with bacteria**. The contaminated vaccine, manufactured by a U.S. biotechnology firm in a British regulatory agency suspended the company's license.

The House Government Reform Committee is investigating reports that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ignored early warning signals about the plant, which has a **history** of quality problems. Meanwhile, a grand jury has subpoenaed the company to find out if it misled regulators or investors.

This year's shortage follows years of warnings by public health experts about growing dependence in the U.S. on just a few vaccine makers, according to the New York Times. Thirty years ago, 25 companies supplied the nation's vaccines, compared to only five this year.

Flu vaccine is in especially short supply, with only two major manufacturers today. Pharmaceutical companies complain that flu vaccines are not profitable enough, due to varying demand and the need for new vaccines at the start of each season to deal with changing virus strains.

As elderly and chronically ill people wait in line for hours to get flu shots, federal officials have announced that 2.6 million additional doses of flu vaccine will be available in January. However, flu season generally peaks in January, and it takes two weeks after vaccination to develop immunity. That is why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend October to November vaccinations.

As a natural therapist and firm believer that what God has provided in Nature is **far superior** to anything man can generate in a lab, this season, more than ever, I encourage each individual to seek out natural approaches to not only winter health but health in general.

A healthy immune system is critically important to help you withstand the ravages of winter. The immune system includes barriers that keep foreign materials from entering your body, such as the skin, mucus and the cough reflex. If these barriers fail or become overwhelmed, protection is provided by taking internal components.

One of the best ways to defend yourself against colds and flu's, is by a consistent healthy lifestyle with good nutrition, vegetable and fruit juicing, herbal teas, plenty of exercise, peaceful sound sleep and as the Bible says in **Rom 12:18** "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." KJV

Science now shows that emotional and physiological stress significantly impact the immune system.

Additional simple lifestyle patterns that are important to your immune defense are:

Wash Your Hands

A study evaluated the impact of a one-hour educational session on hand washing for staff members of senior day-care centers. Attendees experienced significantly fewer winter health difficulties. Hand washing for 10 to 15 seconds with soap and water reduces the spread of germs. Keeping your hands away from your face is also important to prevent the transfer of bacteria into the mucus linings.

Eat Your Veggies--Skip the Sugar

Studies show that regular meals and consuming green vegetables are associated with a stronger immune response by white blood cells. Conversely, consumption of simple carbohydrates and sweets decreases white blood cell activity. So, eat your greens--and go easy on holiday treats!

Early to Bed, Early to Rise

Sleep does more than make you feel rested. Two studies with healthy volunteers demonstrated suppression of immunological function after one night of modest sleep deprivation. The activity of certain white blood cells and the production of chemicals essential for immune system performance significantly decreased.

Most U.S. adults get less than seven hours of sleep per night during the work week, while research has determined that certain parameters of immune function are enhanced by more than seven hours of sleep. If you are trying to recover from a chronic illness, or recover from surgery, nine hours of sleep per night is ideal.