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Flu and Colds – Herbal 1st Aid

Studies have found that **garlic** has antimicrobial, antiviral, antifungal, and antiprotozoal properties. Try soothing garlic soup at the first signs of a cold, or add lots of garlic to chicken soup. Go for fresh garlic - it's likely to be more effective than supplements.

Ginger has also shown to have antimicrobial and antiviral properties, so consuming it while you're sick may help knock out whatever is ailing you. Add minced fresh ginger root to soup, or blend it into a Vitamin C-rich fruit smoothie.

Ever get that teary-eyed, runny-nosed, throat-clearing sensation after eating **chilli peppers**? Next time you're miserably congested and scratchy-throated, put those peppers to work! Chiles appear to have anti-inflammatory properties too, so they may give you some respite if you're feeling achy.

Mint is a natural source of menthol, so a steaming cup of mint tea can actually help open clogged nasal passages and soothe sore throats, at least temporarily. If you're running a fever, menthol's cooling sensation may help you feel a little more comfortable. Mint is also a great stomach soother.

This little floral herb soothes the stomach, and relaxes both mind and body. Because it has mild muscle-relaxing properties, it may help alleviate aches and pains, too. Try a cup of **chamomile** tea before bedtime, and get the healing rest you need.

Safety tip: If you are on anticoagulant drugs or are scheduled for surgery, talk to your doctor or registered dietician before consuming large amounts of ginger or garlic.

Source: HSI, e-alert 12. November 2008



**Happy and Healthy Holidays
everyone!**

Vitamin D reduces the Risk for many Diseases

Most healthy individuals get all the vitamins and minerals they need from eating a balanced diet, but vitamin D is the exception. It is made by the action of sunlight on the skin, which accounts for 90 per cent of the body's supply.

Vitamin D stores lasts for around 60 days. Twenty minutes twice a week in the sun with exposed arms and face is adequate to maintain reserves. In the Winter, the sun in Northern Europe is too weak for our bodies to make the vitamin, and by Spring time, up to 60 % of the population is vitamin D deficient.

Evidence suggests that vitamin D protects against several malignancies, including **breast cancer**, ([JW Womens Health Aug 2 2007](#)). Canadian investigators showed that higher vitamin D exposure during adolescence and young adulthood was associated with less risk for breast cancer later in life.

US Researchers from Winthrop University Hospital in Mineola, found that giving supplements of vitamin D to a group of volunteers reduced the occurrence of **colds and flu** by 70 %.

Vitamin D lowers insulin resistance, which is one of the major factors in **heart disease**. It is also used by the thyroid gland, which secretes a hormone that regulates the body's levels of calcium, which in turns helps regulate blood pressure.

Researchers followed 12,000 children born in 1966 until 1997 and found that those who developed rickets, indicating vitamin D deficiency, were three times more likely to become **diabetic**.

Source: HSI e-alert, 5. December 2008

Super Food - Cod Liver Oil

Cod liver oil contains vitamin D and is high in omega 3. Both these nutrients are important for the immune system and may help war off colds in the wintertime. In addition they are also important for mood and might help ease that 'winter blues'.

Don't change your medication or start a supplement regime without consulting a health professional.