Help Keep the Common Cold at Bay

As beautiful as this fall has been with the colors and warm weather, the cooler temperatures are upon us. Not only does this mean the coming snow, but the common cold season as well! What can we do to help prevent the unpleasant viruses from getting us down?

Many people may automatically think of medications and shots as a preventative measure rather than other methods to prevent catching a common cold. These are good solutions and may even be recommended by your doctor, and as we learned in the previous newsletter, exercise is also medicine! One of the many and wonderful benefits of exercise is helping the immune system which, consequently, may help keep the common cold at bay.

The immune system is made up of many intricate cells, tissues, and organs working together to defend the body against foreign matter. One of these fighting, or protective cells includes a type of white blood cell called T cells which may increase with exercise.

A study in the American Journal of Medicine showed that women who walked an average of 30 minutes per day for one year experienced half as many colds than women who did not get that daily exercise. Exercise not only contributes to the increased amount of helping cells in your body, it also improves the circulation which may help the system cycle quicker than those who do not exercise.

Although there is no vaccine for the common cold, there are things we can do to stay healthy to lessen the chances of catching it, one of which is regular exercise. Three more recommendations from the National Institute of Health include:

- Washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching face with unwashed hands, and
- Stay away from people who have the virus

If you are unfortunate and catch the cold, plenty of rest and fluids will help the healing process. This season, I challenge you to get at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise at least three days per week. It does not have to be 30 minutes all at once, but throughout the whole day. All activity counts towards your health!

-Theresa Kossey, B.A, ACE Fitness Specialist


Staying Active in the Winter Months

With temperatures dropping and ice forming on the ground, it may be harder to get outside and enjoy your favorite warm-weather activities. However, you can still battle the winter blues and raise your energy levels in the colder months--even 30 minutes of moving every day helps. If you enjoy walks outside, be sure to bundle up before you leave and don’t forget your hat! Up to 60% of body heat can escape from your head. As snow accumulates on the ground and ice makes sidewalks slippery, your risk of falling also increases. To stay warm and safe from falls, head to the mall and walk for 30 minutes. Bring a friend or family member with you to keep you company and motivated--having fun with others also helps beat the blues. With the holidays approaching, this is also a great way to catch up and spread the holiday cheer! If the roads are too bad to drive on, you can turn your house into a home gym. Warm up--this is especially important once the temperature drops--by walking laps around your house. Then, do exercises with things already in your house. Use your chair to stand up and sit down as many times as you can in 30 seconds and to hold while doing calf raises. If you do not have dumbbells, use soup cans as weights to do exercises such as bicep curls and shoulder press; be creative with general household items. Don’t forget to have fun and keep moving!

Emily Krueger
Fall 2015 Intern
## What Exercise Researchers are Saying Lately...

Insomnia and other sleeping problems plague humanity. We see it on TV all the time, countless ads advertising sleeping aids to help individuals who suffer from troubled sleeping. An estimated 17-24% of middle age men and women suffer from insomnia. Many of these individuals turn to prescriptions and over-the-counter remedies to aid in sleeping. Many of these products are successful at reducing sleeping complaints, but the long term use of these remedies have been questioned in terms of safety and overall health. Evidence suggests that regular exercise is the most favorable option to manage sleep disturbance. In research studies, exercise has been shown to improve sleep quality in healthy middle-age and older adults, postmenopausal women, and older adults diagnosed with depression.

A study performed by Dishman et al. (2015) looked at cardiorespiratory fitness level and how it relates to sleep complaints. 8,523 men and women with ages varying from 20 to 85 years old were measured on their cardiorespiratory fitness at 4 separate occasions. The subjects were assessed on a treadmill every 2-3 years between the years of 1971 and 2006. At each assessment, subjects completed a questionnaire asking if they had any sleep complaints, depression, or anxiety since the previous visit. What the results showed was, for every minute of decline in endurance, there was an increase in sleep complaints by 1.7%. Therefore, the authors have argued that maintaining cardiorespiratory fitness throughout middle age, helps to prevent the onset of sleep complaints.

The reason the authors argue for maintaining fitness throughout middle age is because normally during middle age, our cardiorespiratory fitness begins to decline as part of the aging process. We begin to lose muscle mass, our heart rate slows down, blood vessels become stiffer, and as a result, our fitness level drops. Therefore, it is even more important to maintain physical activity and exercise throughout the middle ages and beyond. The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week or 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity per week. Achieving these levels on a weekly basis will help to maintain cardiorespiratory fitness level, slow down the inevitable decline in fitness, and help you to sleep without complaint.

---

### Nutrition:

- **Calories:** 332
- **Cholesterol:** 20 mg
- **Protein:** 67.7 g
- **Fat:** 10.9 g
- **Sodium:** 69 mg
- **Carbohydrates:** 43.3 g

---

### Healthy Recipe: Penne with Chicken and Asparagus

**Ingredients:**
- 1 (16 ounce) package dried penne pasta
- 5 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cut into cubes
- salt and pepper to taste
- garlic powder to taste
- 1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 bunch slender asparagus spears, trimmed, cut on diagonal into 1-inch pieces
- 1 clove garlic, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

**Preparation:**

1) Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to boil. Add pasta, and cook until al dente, about 8 to 10 minutes. Drain, and set aside.

2) Warm 3 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Stir in chicken, and season with salt, pepper, and garlic powder. Cook until chicken is cooked through and browned, about 5 minutes. Remove chicken to paper towels.

3) Pour chicken broth into the skillet. Then stir in asparagus, garlic, and a pinch more garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Cover, and steam until the asparagus is just tender, about 5 to 10 minutes. Return chicken to the skillet, and warm through.

4) Stir chicken mixture into pasta, and mix well. Let sit about 5 minutes. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons olive oil, stir again, then sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

---

**Prepared by Ryan Werme, BS**

**Fitness Specialist**

November is National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness Month

Alzheimer’s Disease is the most common form of dementia and is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. It is characterized by problems with memory, thinking, and behavior. In its early stages, memory loss is mild, but with late-stage Alzheimer’s, individuals lose the ability to carry on a conversation and respond to their environment.

The good news is that onset of Alzheimer’s can be prevented. Staying active greatly reduces the risk of developing this disease. In honor of National Alzheimer’s Disease Awareness month, the Transition Studio Staff encourages you to stay active.

♦ Find activities that you enjoy doing so you are more likely to continue. These can include walking, jogging, biking, Zumba, swimming, and many more!
♦ Aim for 150 minutes of physical activity per week as suggested by the American Heart Association.
♦ Don’t forget to include muscle strengthening and flexibility activities as well as balance exercises.

Participating in physical activities will not only decrease your risk for developing diseases, such as Alzheimer’s, but will also improve your physical health, enhance your mental outlook, and save you on medical costs in the future.

If you notice any of the following warning signs of Alzheimer’s Disease, please see a doctor right away.

⇒ Memory loss that disrupts daily life.
⇒ Confusion with time or place.
⇒ Prolonged changes in mood and personality.

Do you or someone you know suffer from chronic pain? Are you frustrated that pain limits your life and the activities you’ve enjoyed in the past? Do you want to be in the best physical condition possible despite your chronic pain? If you answered yes to any of these questions then the “Ease into Exercise” program could be right for you. The Department of PM&R provides credentialed staff and programming to help you manage your chronic pain (while becoming more fit) at our beautiful Transitions Training Studio. The program includes a variety of exercises with the use of bands, machines, free weights and your own body weight! Many exercises can even be performed at home. The staff will be happy to make accommodations when necessary as well. Day-to-day changes in your pain will possibly effect your workouts, but keeping the big picture in mind as you move towards your goals will be critical to your success.

A structured exercise program is an important component of your overall pain management strategy. As the research suggests, any reduction in physical activity will lead to a detrimental cycle. For more information on the program contact Britt Michel at brittm@med.umich.edu or call 734-763-4990.

Feature Program: “Ease Into Exercise” at Transitions
Before I signed up at Transitions Studio, I had not been exercising regularly for most of my adult life. My brief experience at gyms did not inspire me. I felt it was too much time spent for too little results. Plus, I didn’t fit in with the group, which usually consisted of younger, more physically fit clients. Finally, workouts were mostly do-it-yourself. Trainers were usually not included, inadequate motivators, not fitness experts, or an expensive ad-on.

Due to Transitions being recommended to me by a friend after PT and because of the enthusiastic endorsement of a friend (thanks, Evans!), I decided to give it a try too. I’m very glad I did! The major differences in this gym to others I’ve tried are these: the senior age group orientation, the staff, the members, and the setting.

The director, Britt Michel, has developed a specialized program for seniors that can be customized to just about anyone. The program is not just about strength, but also focuses on mobility and balance. Another aspect is Britt’s ability to analyze our injuries (as well as our aches and pains!) to recommend what exercises to avoid as well as what new ones to try to help alleviate the problem. This has been absolutely invaluable for me.

The staff is pleasant, knowledgeable, and attentive to member needs. Individual programs are followed and progress is monitored, unlike many other gyms.

The members are special! Many are multi-year veterans who are willing to share their experiences and knowledge with newbies. This is hard to quantify, but wonderful to experience!

The place itself is special! What a joy to work out with a view to a beautiful nature setting that changes with the seasons. Great fun to see the ducks and squirrels parade for us too!

The issues for most of us are, “Is it worth it?” and “Do I have the time and the money?” The value issue is easy when you consider the facts. If “the more you do, the more you can do” and “the less you do, the less you can do” mean anything, coupled to the detrimental physical effects of aging, then the effort is certainly worth it for me. No mistaking: an effort is required, but it’s fun too!

The results for me after 16 months? I no longer have the “usual aches and pains” I used to have and I have easily doubled the weight settings on most machines. This translates to not being as easily injured and “Do I have the time and the money?” The value issue is easy when you consider the facts. If “the more you do, the more you can do” and “the less you do, the less you can do” mean anything, coupled to the detrimental physical effects of aging, then the effort is certainly worth it for me. No mistaking: an effort is required, but it’s fun too!

The results for me after 16 months? I no longer have the “usual aches and pains” I used to have and I have easily doubled the weight settings on most machines. This translates to not being as easily injured and having more energy throughout the day.

**Exercise of the Month: Standing Knee Curls**

This exercise helps to strengthen the hamstring muscles on the back of the thigh. To perform this exercise, find a sturdy object such as a kitchen counter or the back of a chair and hold onto it.

1. Shift the weight to your right foot and bend your left knee.
2. Lift your left heel as far as your buttocks as possible on a two second count. Breathe out as you lift, making sure to only bend at the knee and keep your hips still. Your right leg on the ground should be slightly bent.
3. Hold this position for one second and then lower your foot to the floor on a four second count, breathing out as you do so.
4. Repeat 10 to 15 times and then follow the same steps while standing on your left foot.