

### Colds + Flu 'Herbal rescue' during pregnancy



During pregnancy, the immune system is slightly compromised and therefore infections seem easier to catch and colds and flus take longer to get over. At the first sign of illness, simplify your daily activities and get lots of rests. Take a sick day from work if possible and give yourself some TLC.

Here are fabulous remedies by Monika Ghent, Registered Herbalist, practising in West Toronto.

More info...The Ontario Herbalists Association: <http://www.herbalists.on.ca/> / Monika Ghent: (416) 537-8842 or [ghent7@sympatico.ca](mailto:ghent7@sympatico.ca)



#### STIMULATE THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

**The Wet Sock Treatment:** The wet sock treatment is an easy way to boost your immune system quickly. Cold on your feet initiates the fever response which is the body's natural way of fighting off cold and flu 'bugs' and increasing the circulating levels of white blood cells. This treatment is very effective for fever, sore throat, ear infections, headaches, migraines, upper respiratory infections and congestion, coughs, and bronchitis. This treatment increases the circulation and decreases congestion in the upper respiratory passages, head, and throat. It also has a sedating action and improves sleep quality. It is effective for pain relief and increases the healing response during acute infections. I know it seems bananas but it works really well.

Make sure your feet are warm first. If need be give them a soak in warm water or do this after a bath. Soak the cotton socks in very, very cold water and then wring them out thoroughly so that they aren't dripping. Put them on your feet. Put the wool socks over the cotton socks and get into bed for the night immediately. Keep the socks on over night. In the morning they will be bone dry. Repeat this procedure for 3 nights in a row. To enhance this whole process, sip a cup of ginger tea after getting into bed.



**Ginger Tea & Friends:** Ginger root is excellent for colds and flus because it stimulates the immune system, brings down a fever and helps clear toxins and congestion. It clears phlegm in the lungs and is good for infections of the lower and upper respiratory tract. At the onset of a cold finely chop fresh ginger root (a piece that measures from the last knuckle to the end of your thumb) and steep it in a cup of boiled water for 15 minutes covered. Strain and drink a cup every couple of hours. For greater kick and immune stimulating properties add to your ginger tea a pinch of powdered cayenne, 1 tsp honey, and the juice of half a small lemon. To ratchet this tea up yet another notch add 1 clove of crushed raw garlic. Garlic is one of our best natural antibiotics and is excellent for any infections in the body. Its essential oils are expressed through the lungs so it is a must for any lower respiratory tract infection. This is an excellent drink for that can be used by everyone in the family. This tea will enhance your immunity, increase circulation, decrease congestion, and reduce a fever. You will feel very hot but that is because the blood is going to the surface of the skin to help dispel the heat. Make sure your always very well covered and don't let yourself get chilled.

**[Caution: Ginger in large amounts (more than 1-2 grams of dried ginger per day) has been associated with miscarriage. Do not exceed the recommended dosage and avoid altogether in the first trimester if you have a history of miscarriage].**

**Onion Soup:** Cut 1 large yellow onion in small pieces; cover with 2L of water; simmer for ½ hour. Strain + add honey to taste. Drink 2 cups ever 2 hours until flu is gone.

**Echinacea Tincture:** Take 30 drops of echinacea tincture 5 times a day until the infection has passed.

#### SUPPLEMENTS

Take 250mg of Ester C every 2 hours up to 2000mg daily during the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester or up to 4,000mg daily later in pregnancy. Take for 5 consecutive days and then stop. If you get diarrhea while on the vitamin C you have reached bowel tolerance, which isn't dangerous, so decrease the dosage.

These herbal protocols are safe for older kids with a few adjustments of supplements: vitamin C as recommended on the bottle for the age of their children; Echinacea tincture dosage needs to be decreased according to the child's age: 1 drop for every 2 pounds of body weight 4-5 times a day or as recommended on the bottle. Honey should not be used by children 1 year and younger because of botulism.

Please consult a medical professional.

NEXT BULLETIN: Toxic Toys + safer gifts for kids!

#### DECONGESTING THE SINUSES

**Mustard Foot Baths:** Hot mustard foot baths are used for congestion in the sinuses and lungs, a chest cough, headaches, and is an old recipe for throwing off colds. The blood flows away from the over-congested area and rushes to the feet. The body soon sends the blood back through normal channels, and proper circulation is restored. Mix 1 tbsp of dry mustard powder into 2L of hot water and soak your feet for 10 minutes, twice daily. Cover your head with a hat to increase body heat.

**Salt Douche:** Use a saltwater douche in the nose to decongest the sinuses. Dissolve ¼ tsp of sea salt in one cup of warm purified water. Use a tablespoon to sniff the solution up your nostrils one at a time. Place a tbsp of solution under one nostril, block off the other nostril with your finger and sniff. Spit out the solution, do not swallow it. Do other nostril, and then repeat. Gently blow your nose. Do this 3-4 times a day.

#### SORE THROAT + COUGHS

**Echinacea Tincture:** Gargle with 30 – 60 drops echinacea tincture in 30mls warm water for a few minutes and then swallow in small amounts while tilting your head side to side and back and forward so the Echinacea washes over your entire throat.

**Salt Water and Sage:** Mix 1 cup boiled water, 2 tsp sage leaves (dried; or 3 tsp fresh), ¼ tsp salt. Pour boiling water over the sage, cover and steep for 20 minutes. Strain and add salt and stir. Gargle when cooled to a comfortable temperature. Gargle repeatedly (4 times or so). Spit out tea. Do this at least 2 times a day (preferable 3).

**Cough:** Make syrup in glass jar, ½ filled with sliced garlic + onion. Pour in warmed raw (or Manuka) honey. Cover. In morning, strain out garlic + onion. Take 1 tsp as needed.

#### REDUCING FEVER

Any of the above treatments will reduce fever. Also sipping a few cups throughout the day of lemon balm, catnip or chamomile tea will bring your fever down.

#### first aid scenario #6

Answers next bulletin

1. What do you do if you suspect poisoning?
2. What are 5 ways to prevent poisoning in the home, with kids?

Answers to last 2HEALTH Bulletin's scenario #5:

5 First Aid Wives-tales + correct firstaid tips:

**Nose bleeds** (correct firstaid: tilt head forward and pinch nose); **Seizures** (correct firstaid: prevent head injuries, however don't restrain); **Burns** (correct firstaid: keep wound free of oil products and only cover with non-stick gauze); **Choking** (correct firstaid: perform abdominal thrusts on a conscious adult or child and for an infant, hold child in arm head-down and perform back blows. Don't hit the back while upright); **Embedded object** (correct firstaid: keep object as found, if able to, wrap dressings around wound to secure it and prevent infections)

**What does R.I.C.E. Stand for and what is it used for?:** This acronym stands for Rest, Ice or Immobilize, Compression or Cold and Elevation (only if possible). These items are part of the treatment for various injuries like: fractures/ dislocations, soft tissue wounds, bleeding, bruises, and sprains/ strains.

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