Tips for Preventing Winter Illness

Winter is the season when it’s easiest to get sick. Unfortunately, when the weather is colder, there are more illnesses going around, most notably colds and the flu. However, there are plenty of things you can do to protect yourself from winter illness this season. Here are the top tips to stay healthy.

**Get a Flu Shot**

Although it’s late in the season, you can still lower your risk of getting the flu by getting a flu shot. Even if your primary care doctor doesn’t have the shot anymore, you can find that many chain pharmacy stores still offer it. There are many strains of the flu out there, so getting a shot can only help you, even if you get it several months into the flu season.

**Get Enough Sleep**

Getting at least a solid eight hours of sleep each night can really help you to fight winter illness. Having enough sleep ensures that your immune system is working better and can fight off viruses and bacteria more effectively. When you get too few hours of sleep, it has the opposite effect because you are overly tired, run down and your defenses are down. In turn, that makes you more susceptible to getting sick. You should also aim to go to bed and wake up at the same times every day.

**Exercise Daily**

Another good way to improve your immune system is to exercise on a daily basis. You don’t have to do anything too strenuous and can even simply incorporate a one-hour walk into your daily routine to improve your health. It will keep you more fit and help to prevent catching a cold and other viruses. You can also find that you feel better in general and sleep better at night when you take a daily walk.

**Eat Healthier Foods**

Eating healthier foods is generally essential. That means you should aim to incorporate at least five fruits and vegetables into your diet each day. These foods are rich with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that can boost your immune system and help to prevent getting winter illness. Citrus fruits and garlic, in particular, can keep the germs at bay by increasing your vitamin C.

**Wash Your Hands More Often**

If you’re afraid of getting sick this winter, especially if you are around people who have the sniffles, you should wash your hands more often. When you do that, it will keep your hands clean and help to prevent the spread of germs. You can also use hand sanitizer if there isn’t a sink and soap handy at certain times.

**Avoid Touching Your Face**

One of the easiest ways to spread germs is to touch your face too often. When illness is running rampant during the winter or any other time, touching your face around the nose, mouth and eyes can easily lead to getting sick. If possible, you should avoid touching your face.

**Quit Smoking**

If you are a smoker, you’re already more likely to get sick. This is because smoking increases your risk of developing winter illnesses like upper respiratory infections. Additionally, smoking destroys cilia, which are the tiny hairs inside the nose. Cilia help you to fight illness by catching germs, so if you are lacking in that area, it’s easier to get sick.

These tips can help you to stay healthier this winter. When you don’t get sick, it will be better for you and everyone around you.