

**PENNY SAVER NEWS**

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March 21, 2008

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**Tips for Coughs and Colds**

The dreaded cough and cold season is behind us, but that doesn't mean we can't catch a nasty bug this time of year. Cough and cold viruses are everywhere. These viruses move from person to person and can have a variety of symptoms. You may have a runny nose, sinus congestion, a sore throat, cough, or fever. There is no cure for the cold, but there are many products available that you can buy at the store to reduce these symptoms. Here are some helpful ways to help you avoid getting one of these bugs and what to do if you're one of the unlucky ones that catches one anyway.

There are a few simple things you can do to help avoid getting a cough or cold. Wash your hands often to reduce how many germs you carry. You need to use soap and warm water, and wash for at least 15 seconds. It helps to sing a song like Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star to make sure you are washing for the whole 15 seconds, especially if you are washing your child's hands. Use a tissue when you sneeze or cough, and throw the tissue away as soon as possible. Using Lysol or other products that say "antiviral" on doorknobs, telephones, and surfaces touched frequently may help you prevent a cold as well.

If you get a cold, it is important that you make sure you have enough rest and drink plenty of fluids. Just like Grandmother said, eating chicken noodle soup helps! Cups of warm tea, or hot broth are other simple ways to increase your fluids and soothe an irritated throat at the same time. Steamy showers and vaporizers can help with stuffy

noses and coughing. If your nose starts getting dry, you can use saline spray or drops in your nose. Chicken Noodle Soup may be useful as an anti-inflammatory, too. There was a reason Grandmother wanted you to have chicken noodle soup when you were sick!

Products you can buy at the store for your cough and cold include decongestants for stuffy noses, antihistamines for runny noses and sneezing, cough suppressants for a dry cough, and expectorants for phlegm and mucus containing coughs. Sore Throats can be treated with lozenges, sprays, and disintegrating strips.

Check the boxes on the medicines to make sure you are taking the right medicine for your symptoms. You should look at the Active Ingredients part of the box. Ask the pharmacist or doctor if you need help picking one out. Most products have more than one ingredient in them, so make sure you are not giving yourself more than one ingredient for the same symptom, or the same ingredient in several different medications. That could lead to a dangerous overdose. Follow the directions carefully.

If your child is the one with the cough or cold, it is very important to follow the directions and check the ingredients. Don't use kitchen tablespoons or cups as measuring devices- you could be giving too much or too little medicine. Use the measuring spoons and cups that come with the bottle. If symptoms get worse or you have more symptoms while using any of these products, call your doctor.

Not everyone can safely use products over the counter once they get a cough or cold. If you have high blood pressure, heart disease, hyperthyroidism, diabetes, or prostate problems, consult your doctor before you take a decongestant. If you are having chest pain, shortness of breath or have a fever of more than 101.5 degrees, then

you should see a doctor.

Here's a recipe for a simple chicken noodle soup. You can substitute canned chicken broth instead of chicken stock if you can't find stock. And if you don't want to chop veggies, use a can of mixed veggies. It's quick, easy, and a great way to increase your fluids when you're sick!

### Easy Chicken Noodle Soup

4 Cups Chicken Stock

½ Cup Each Carrot, Celery, Onion, chopped

½ Cup Uncooked Medium Egg Noodles 5 oz. cooked, cubed chicken (or 5 oz can)

A dash each of Salt and pepper (or a low sodium spice mixture like Mrs. Dash)

In a medium saucepan, combine stock, carrots, celery, onion, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Stir in noodles. Reduce heat to medium. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring often.

Add chicken and heat through. Makes 4 Servings