

Take Care Of Your Cold Or (Non-Avian) Flu—Naturally

Not sure whether it's a cold or a flu bug that's got you sneezing and sniffing? Here's how you can discriminate one from the other:

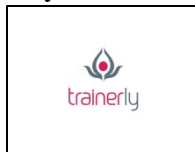
<u>Cold</u>	<u>Flu</u>
Gradual Onset	Sudden Onset
Feel cruddy, but can get out of bed	Hard to get up
No body aches	Significant body aches
No fever	Fever, headache

Both cold and flu are caused by viruses, and both can lead to secondary bacterial infections, such as bronchitis or sinus infection. Take steps to keep mucus moving out of the body: do a saline rinse of your nose with a neti pot, or sniff some salt water up into your nose from a cupped hand, then blow your nose. Try adding some eucalyptus or peppermint oil to a pot of very hot water, then tent your head with a cloth and inhale the steam. If you have a cough, try herbal teas made from licorice or horehound (these have expectorant action) or slippery elm or marshmallow (soothing to the throat).

Use herbs like echinacea, goldenseal, elderberry, olive leaf, garlic, and medicinal mushroom extracts (Maitake, shiitake, Cordyceps, and Reishi) to boost the function of your immune system. If you do fall ill with the flu, go straight to bed; don't eat (remember, starve a fever), but drink plenty of liquids and stay bundled up warmly. Chicken broth made with a few slices of dried Astragalus root is a good natural therapy for winter colds and flus. Take 1,000 mg of vitamin C every hour or two if you are exposed to or come down with a winter cold or flu. Unless you've just spent some quality time with a large flock of live poultry, you don't have to worry that it's bird flu.

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