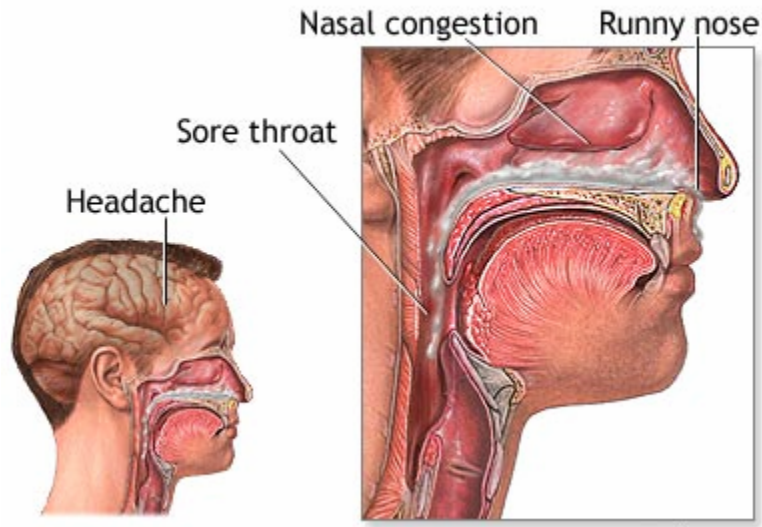


The Common Cold

Symptoms of a cold:



The common cold, also known as "acute coryza," is an inflammation of the upper respiratory tract and is caused by infection with virus. It occurs more often than all other diseases. A person suffers from this disease three times in a year on an average. A cold usually lasts from three to ten days. The patient feels miserable for the first three days or so.

Symptoms

The first signs of a cold are a feeling of soreness of the throat and congestion of the nasal passage. Although the disease normally begins in the nose and throat, it affects all parts of the body. Its usual symptoms are a running nose, sneezing, a rise in temperature, headache, sore throat, chill, aches and pains in the body and loss of appetite. The skin around the nostrils may become sore.

Treatment

To treat a cold by means of customary suppressive drugs like aspirin and codeine only paves the way for future trouble of a more serious nature. For such a treatment puts a sudden stop to the eliminative process then taking place and forces the toxic matter back into the tissues again. Moreover, drugs have no effect on the duration of the cold. It has been aptly said that a cold can be cured in a week by taking medicines, otherwise it will subside in seven days.

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The only real treatment for colds is a proper diet. The best way to begin the treatment is to put the patient on a fast for two days. Nothing should be taken during this period except warm water mixed with lemon juice and honey or fruit juice and hot water. A liquid diet of fruit juice in large amounts is necessary to neutralizes the acid condition of the blood and hot drinks are needed to help clear the kidneys. Pineapple juice in particular is highly beneficial. A warm water enema should be used daily to cleanse the bowels during this period.

The short juice fast may be followed by an exclusive fresh fruit diet for three days. In this regimen, the patient should have three meals a day of fresh juicy fruits such as apples, pears, grapes, grapefruit, oranges, pineapple, peaches, melon or any other juicy fruit in season. Bananas, dried or stewed or tinned fruits, should not be taken. No other foodstuff should be added to the diet as otherwise the whole value of the treatment is lost.

After the exclusive fruit diet, the patient should gradually embark upon a well-balanced diet of three basic food groups, namely (i) seeds, nuts and grains (ii) vegetables and (iii) fruits. It is advisable to avoid meat, fish, eggs, cheese and starchy foods for a few days.

The patient should strengthen the system as a whole by taking a diet which supplies all the vitamins and minerals the body needs. Vitamin C, however, heads the list of these nutrients. It protects one against infection and acts as a harmless antibiotics. It is found in citrus fruits, green leafy vegetables, sprouted Bengal and green grams.

According to Dr. Linus Pauling, a noble prize-winning scientist, the regular use of this vitamin in the optimum daily amount will prevent the common cold and if a cold has already appeared, large doses of this vitamin will relieve the symptoms and shorten its duration. He estimates that one to two grams or 100 mg. to 200 mg. per day is approximately the optimum amount of this vitamin. His advice is to swallow one or two 500 mg. tablets of vitamin C at the appearance of first sign of the cold and continue the treatment by taking an additional tablet every hour.

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Lime is the most important among the many home remedies for common cold. It is highly beneficial in all types of cold and fevers. It should be taken well diluted. Vitamin C-rich lime juice increases resistance, decreases toxicity and reduces the duration of the illness. Lime juice should be diluted in a glass of warm water, and a teaspoonful of honey should be added to it. It forms an ideal remedy for a cold and dry cough.

Garlic soup is an ancient remedy to reduce the severity of cold. Garlic contains antiseptic and antispasmodic properties besides several other medicinal virtues. The volatile oil in garlic flushes out the system of all toxins and thus helps bring down fever. Garlic oil combined with onion juice, diluted with water and drunk several times a day, has also been found in several studies to be extremely effective in the treatment of the common cold.

Ginger is also an excellent food remedy for colds and coughs. Ginger should be cut into small pieces and boiled in a cup of water; it should then be strained and half a teaspoon of sugar added to it. It should be drunk while it is still hot, in case of colds. Ginger tea, prepared by adding a few pieces of ginger into boiled water before adding tea leaves, is also an effective remedy for colds and for fevers resulting from cold.

Turmeric, with its antiseptic properties, is an effective remedy for cold and throat irritations. Half a teaspoonful of fresh turmeric powder mixed in 30 grams of warm milk is a useful prescription for these conditions. Turmeric powder should be put into a hot ladle. Milk should then be poured in it and boiled over a slow fire. In case of a running cold, smoke from the burning turmeric should be inhaled. It will increase the discharge from the nose and will bring quicker relief.

Water Treatment

A hot water bath, if it can be taken without undue exposure, is recommended as it helps relieve much of the congestion in the chest and nasal membranes. Hot packs or fomentations are excellent for treating chest and head colds. Steam bath, hot foot bath and hot hip bath are also beneficial as they stimulate perspiration. Steam inhalation will help relieve the congestion of the nasal tissues. Gargling with hot water mixed with salt is beneficial for a sore

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throat. Cold chest packs should be applied two or three times a day as they will relieve congestion of lungs and help in eliminating the accumulated mucus.

Other useful measures in the treatment of common cold are mild sunbath, fresh air and deep breathing, brisk walks, sound sleep, adjustment of one's clothes and habits to the requirements of the season, so as to nullify the effect of weather fluctuations.

Yogasanas like bhujangasana, shalabhasana, dhanurasana, and yogamudra in vajrasana, yogic kriyas such as jalneti and vamanahouti and pranayamas such as kapalbhati, anuloma- viloma and suryabhedana are beneficial in the treatment of the common cold.

Reference

Shri H.K. Bakhru. (1999). Natures Cure.

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