

More Cold Prevention Tips

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More ways to catch fewer colds this year.

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Probiotics: The Surprise Players

An effective cold remedy that you probably haven't heard much about is [taking probiotics](#). These are the friendly bacteria found in yogurt and other fermented foods. (For more on friendly bacteria, I did [an entire show on them](#) a few weeks back.)

Most people don't think of probiotics in terms of cold prevention and I was actually somewhat surprised to come across a couple of studies showing that taking probiotics along with a [multi-vitamin](#) throughout the cold and flu season showed some promising results. It didn't reduce the number of colds but it did make the colds shorter and less severe, which I'd definitely put in the "plus" column.

You can get probiotics from eating yogurt, fresh sauerkraut, and other fermented foods. But this particular study used a supplement containing a higher dose than you'd probably get from foods alone. When buying probiotic supplements, be sure check the expiration date. These are living organisms and freshness is definitely an issue.

The Number One Thing You Can Do to Prevent Colds

Actually, the biggest thing you can do to avoid getting a cold this year isn't nutritional at all; it's pure hygiene. The number one way you get colds is by touching infected surfaces, like door knobs, pencils, elevator buttons, telephones, or someone's germey hand, and then touching your nose or eyes. So the best way to avoid catching colds is by washing your hands every time you get the chance. It also really helps to keep your hands away from your face.