



# The Beacon

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## Med-Cert Medical Management Resources

*“Guiding your way to better health management”*

### Natural Tips to Help Prevent a Cold

Since there are no known cures for colds and flu, cold and flu prevention should be your goal. A proactive approach to warding off colds and flu is apt to make your whole life healthier. The most effective way for preventing the flu is to get the flu shot. But there are other strategies you can employ as well. Here are some tips you can use to help prevent colds and the flu naturally:

#### Wash Your Hands

Most cold and flu viruses are spread by direct contact. Someone who has the flu sneezes onto his or her hand and then touches the telephone, the keyboard, a kitchen glass or plate. The germs can live for hours only to be picked up by the next person who touches the same object. So wash your hands often. If you can't get to a sink, rub an alcohol-based hand sanitizer onto your hands.

#### Don't Cover Your Sneezes and Cough With Your Hands

Because germs and viruses cling to your bare hands, muffling coughs and sneezes with your hands often results in passing along your germs to others. When you feel a sneeze or cough coming, use a tissue and make sure to throw it away immediately. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into the inside of your elbow.

#### Don't Touch Your Face

Cold and flu viruses enter your body through the eyes, nose, or mouth. Touching their faces is the major way children catch colds and a key way they pass colds on to their parents.

#### Do Aerobic Exercise Regularly

Aerobic exercise speeds up the heart to pump larger quantities of blood; makes you breathe faster to help transfer oxygen from your lungs to your blood; and makes you sweat once your body heats up. These exercises help increase the body's natural virus-killing cells.

#### Eat Foods Containing Phytochemicals

"Phyto" means plants, and the natural chemicals in plants give the vitamins in food a supercharged boost. So put away the vitamin pill, and eat dark green, red, and yellow vegetables and fruits.

#### Don't Smoke

Statistics show that heavy smokers get more severe colds and more frequent ones.

Even being around smoke profoundly zaps the immune system. Smoke dries out your nasal passages and paralyzes cilia. These are the delicate hairs that line the mucous membranes in your nose and lungs, and with their wavy movements, sweep cold and flu viruses out of the nasal passages. Experts

contend that *one* cigarette can paralyze cilia for as long as 30 to 40 minutes.

#### Cut Alcohol Consumption

Heavy alcohol use suppresses the immune system in a variety of ways. Heavier drinkers are more prone to initial infections as well as secondary complications. Alcohol also dehydrates the body -- it actually causes more fluid loss from your system than it puts in.

#### Relax

If you can teach yourself to relax, you may be able to rev up your immune system. There's evidence that when you put your relaxation skills into action, your interleukins -- leaders in the immune system response against cold and flu viruses -- increase in the bloodstream. Train yourself to picture an image you find pleasant or calming. Do this for 30 minutes a day for several months. Keep in mind, relaxation is a learnable skill, but it is *not* doing nothing. People who try to relax, but are in fact bored, show no changes in blood chemicals.

### Med-Cert provides:

*Utilization Management, Maternity Management, Large Case and Wellness Disease Management, Transplant Coordination and Stop Loss Assessments*

**For information on any of our services, please call 866-261-5657 (toll free). We**

**are on the Internet. Visit us at:**

[www.medcertinc.com](http://www.medcertinc.com)

## Recognizing an Alcohol Problem

Like cancer or heart disease, alcoholism is a chronic disease with its own symptoms and causes. The disease is progressive and can be fatal if not treated. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lists alcohol abuse as the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States.

According to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD), you may have an alcohol problem if:

- You have experienced problems on the job, with the law or with your family because of your drinking.
- You look forward to a set time in the day when you can start drinking.
- You worry that alcohol won't be available when you want it.
- You periodically try to slow down or stop drinking.
- You sometimes have a drink in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover.
- You experience symptoms of withdrawal (such as nausea, sweating, shakiness and anxiety) if you quit drinking.

If you think you may have an alcohol problem, get help and support. Turn to resources such as your Primary Care Physician. Your workplace may have an Employee Assistance Program or a local chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous. You can also contact the NCADD toll-free at 800-NCA-CALL (800-622-2255) or visit the organization's website at [www.ncadd.org](http://www.ncadd.org).

## November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month

In 2014 an estimated 5.2 million Americans have Alzheimer's disease, including approximately 200,000 individuals younger than age 65 who have younger-onset Alzheimer's. For more information visit: [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) or call 1-800-272-3900.

*A Strong Heart is a Healthy Heart*



In addition to regular physical activity, weightlifting actually helps promote heart health. According to the CDC, lifting even small weights is also beneficial for increased bone density, coordination and maintaining a healthy weight.

## Did you know??

*The palms of the hands and soles of the feet contain more sweat glands than other parts of the body...*

## Med-Cert News

*Our office will be closed on Thursday & Friday, November 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> for the Thanksgiving Holiday*

## Recipe Corner



### Holiday Trifle

#### Ingredients

- 3 Cup fat-free milk or fat-free milk "plus"
- 2 large eggs
- 1 1/2 TBSP cornstarch
- 1 1/2 TBSP granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 TSP vanilla extract
- 9 oz prepared angel food cake, cut into 2" chunks
- 1/3 Cup brandy or orange juice
- 1 can (14-16 oz) whole-berry cranberry sauce
- 1/2 Cup heavy cream
- 1 TBSP Confectioners' sugar (optional)
- 1/4 Cup sliced almonds, toasted

#### Directions

1. Bring milk to a boil over medium heat in large saucepan and turn off heat. Meanwhile, beat eggs, cornstarch, granulated sugar, and vanilla extract in medium bowl until smooth.
2. Add hot milk to egg mixture in a thin stream, whisking. Pour back into saucepan and cook over medium-low heat, whisking, until thickened, about 10 minutes.
3. Pour custard into bowl and chill 30 minutes.
4. Put half of the cake cubes in 2 1/2- to 3-quart trifle dish or glass bowl. Sprinkle with half of the brandy, then spread half of the cranberry sauce over cake. Cover with half of the custard. Repeat process to make a second layer, covering top of cake with custard. Chill overnight.
5. Whip cream with confectioners' sugar, if using, just until soft peaks form. Spread on top of trifle and sprinkle with almonds.



This newsletter is brought to you courtesy of Med-Cert Inc. Our sources for this edition are Web MD, Prevention Magazine and Healthy Living.