

SUMMERWOOD

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Volume 10, Issue 1

Summerwood Community Association

www.summerwood.org

January 2008

5 Easy Steps to Avoid the Flu And Colds This Year

Submitted by Dr. Jim Pollard, D.C.

With winter holidays comes the cold and flu season. What's so special about this time of year that has so many folks falling victim to the common cold or flu? The answer may not be what you think. Why is it that some get sick and others don't? The answer is simple. Some are better fit to fight off the attack than others. So, how do you stay fit and avoid catching the cold or flu? Here are five easy steps to help you and your family stay healthy.

1. Wash your hands often.

Contagious sick people unintentionally spread their "bugs" wherever they go. Wash your hands regularly and avoid touching your hands to your face. No need for chemically anti-bacterial hand gels; simple water and soap will suffice.

2. Get plenty of rest.

When you physically exhaust yourself from work and all of the extra activity that the holidays bring, you leave your body with less energy to fight off an attack. In addition, your body does much of its maintenance and repair while you sleep. The more rest that you get, the better your body is able to fight off illness.

3. Support your immune system naturally.

Vitamin C, zinc and grape seed extract are powerful antioxidants. Silver ion is the most powerful natural antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal

known. Probiotics, such as those found in live-culture yogurts and kefir, are important in supporting immunity too, by protecting the "good bugs."

4. Maintain your exercise program.

I know, I know. It's difficult to maintain an exercise program routine this time of the year. There are only so many hours in the day. So abbreviate your usual routine. This is important because your body releases pent-up stress when you exercise. If left alone, this stress can lead to fatigue and physical breakdown. Exercise, also, releases beneficial hormones, improves immune response and helps you get a better night's sleep.

5. Maximize your immune response with Chiropractic.

A healthy nervous system is crucial to a healthy immune response. The nervous system is the "road" that the immune system uses to respond to an attack. Many people don't realize that regular chiropractic adjustments keep your "roads" clear. Those visits that keep your spine flexible and healthy may help you avoid the cold or flu this year.

Recipe of the Month



Taco Soup

- 1 lb. ground beef or turkey
- 1 can Rotel tomatoes
- 1 small onion
- 1 can ranch style beans
- Taco seasoning
- 1 can corn
- Ranch dressing packet
- 1-2 cans chicken broth
- 1 tomato

Brown beef and onion. Add taco seasoning and ranch dressing. Chop tomato and add to beef. Dump in rest of ingredients. Boil 15-20 minutes. Serve with sharp cheddar cheese and a dollop of sour cream on top

SUMMERWOOD

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South Lake Houston EMS (Dispatch).....	281-459-1277
Dead Animal Pick-Up (Precinct 1)	281-820-5151
Animal Control	281-999-3191
After Hours	281-221-5000

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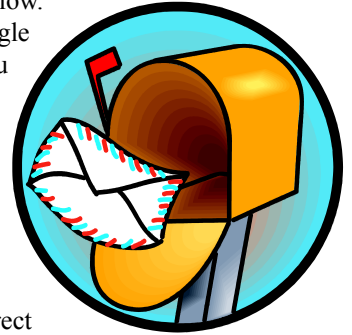
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Understanding Sciatica

Sciatica is a nerve-related condition that can have a major impact on your fitness program and your ability to perform simple, daily tasks with ease.

A relatively common form of back pain, sciatica refers to irritation of the sciatic nerve, which is made up of five branches of nerves that come out of your lumbar and sacral spine.

In many cases, sciatica is caused by a herniated disc that is putting pressure on the sciatic nerve. A herniated disc, which is often brought on by a sudden twisting motion or injury, is sometimes referred to as a slipped, ruptured, bulging or protruding disc, or a pinched nerve.

For others, sciatica may be caused by a narrowing of the spinal canal, or stenosis, which can be congenital or may develop over time. In this case, lesions can form and protrude into the canal and press on the nerves. Sciatic irritation may also be caused by slippage of a vertebral body in front of another, a condition known as spondylolisthesis.

Poor biomechanics, curvature of the back, weak abdominal muscles or pregnancy can contribute to this slippage, which can press on the nerve.

Symptoms of sciatica

As the longest nerve in your body, the sciatic nerve runs down from your lower back through the back of your thighs, where it divides into two branches just above your knees. It further branches out into the muscles below your knees, all the way down to your feet.

Classic symptoms of sciatica often start out with back pain, which may improve over time. However, you may begin to feel pain in one of your hamstrings or calves, and some numbness or tingling in your toes.



For some people, the pain from sciatica can be severe and debilitating. For others, the pain might be infrequent and irritating, but has the potential to get worse. While sciatica can be very painful, permanent nerve damage is rare.

Fortunately, because the spinal cord does not extend through the lumbar (lower) spine, there is no danger of paralysis from a herniated disc in this area.

(Note: If your symptoms include progressive weakness in the legs or bladder/bowel incontinence, this may indicate a serious condition called cauda equina syndrome, which requires immediate medical attention.)

Treating sciatica

How sciatica is treated depends on the severity of the problem. You should, of course, see your doctor for an evaluation and diagnosis if the pain is keeping you from everyday activities.

Nerve pain is caused by both pressure and inflammation on the nerve, and treatment

is concentrated on relieving both of these conditions.

For acute pain along the sciatic nerve, heat and/or ice packs can help relieve pain. Begin by applying heat or ice for about 20 minutes at a time, and repeating every two hours as needed. You can also alternate the two to see if this provides more relief.

For some people, taking oral steroids or an anti-inflammatory such as ibuprofen will help. If the pain is severe, your doctor may inject an epidural directly into the affected area to reduce the inflammation that is causing you pain.

Manual treatments, osteopathic or chiropractic, may help relieve the pressure. Your doctor may also suggest a physical-therapy program that includes back-strengthening or lumbar stabilization exercises.

Fortunately, most people with sciatica can expect their symptoms to improve within a matter of days. For others, relief may come within two to three months.

In a small percentage of cases, where pain is severe and the combination of manual and medical treatments have not provided relief, surgery may be necessary to help relieve both pressure and inflammation.



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A New Year's Resolution that Lasts

By Scott McKay

It's that time of year again...the time we think about the year which lies ahead and reflect upon the year we are leaving behind. Usually, this time of contemplation and reflection yields a host of thoughts and ideas about how to live well - how to make improvements in our lives that will benefit our health, our families, our work. These thoughts and ideas generally lead to the creation of an action plan for the coming year.

One thing we all seem to have in common is a desire to take better care of our bodies, particularly through exercise. As such, most action plans include activities we plan to start doing regularly to improve our health and fitness (ie. the workout).

Often, we make our plan and get off to a great start at the beginning of the year. After a few months, though, we find our interest, enthusiasm and commitment waning. What seemed like a great idea in January often feels too hard by March. The last thing we need is something else that feels like work, right?

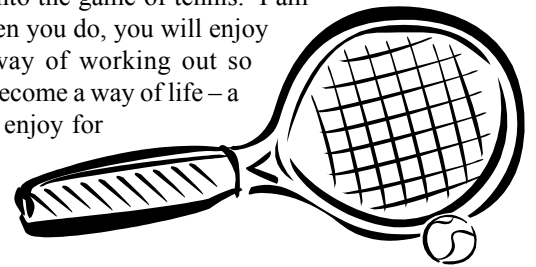
There is good news! There IS something that can put the fun back into your workout. This great game allows you to strengthen your body while also developing and strengthening relationships. (It's a great game for families...and a great way to create special family memories!) This game strengthens the heart of the player, too,

building inner character with qualities such as endurance, patience, persistence and perseverance.

This 'something' is tennis and, around the globe, people have been enjoying the game and reaping the benefits of play for nearly 140 years.

Did you know that you burn 7 calories a minute playing doubles and 14 calories a minute playing singles? Did you know that tennis strengthens the bones, thereby decreasing the risk of osteoporosis? Tennis is also a great way to relieve stress, which is a catalyst to many diseases. Studies show that tennis is one of the best ways to work out your body and maintain a high fitness level for a lifetime.

As you are considering how to get a healthy start to the year, consider getting into the game of tennis. I am confident that when you do, you will enjoy this fresh, new way of working out so much that it will become a way of life - a workout you will enjoy for years to come.



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