

## **Kill-A-Cold Recipe**

(Written by: Jason Feinsmith)

These techniques, when used together, will kill a cold. Despite significant lack of sleep, I never got a cold in my first two years at Stanford Business School, and except when I didn't or couldn't follow the recipe, I haven't gotten sick for almost 20 years.

**The key is to take these steps the moment you think you feel a cold coming on,** because this "recipe" will kill a cold before it's exponential growth is significant. If you don't start until the cold has gotten very real, you've missed the window to really kill it. In that case, you may have to live with it, but this recipe should still help you get rid of the tail end of the cold quicker. All of the herbs can be purchased on amazon.com .

I encourage you to try it. If it works well for you, and even if it doesn't, I'd love to know!

### **1. Kill throat germs at the source:**

Gargle Listerine before bed-time and when you wake up, and optionally during the day. Scope doesn't help, but Listerine does.

Listerine kills any cold inducing bacteria in your throat. It might not help with viruses but it at least won't hurt. I always keep a mini-Listerine bottle in my day bag. If you don't have Listerine, a teaspoon of baking soda per ¼ cup of water works just as well.

### **2. Kill germs nearby by washing:**

Wash your face with soap to kill germs that can get in your mouth, nose and eyes. Just washing your face a couple of times a day is great. Washing your hands 4 times a day is also helpful. The best thing is to take a shower and wash your hair to get clean everywhere, but any of these things is a step in the right direction.

### **3. Keep warm:**

- Always keep the feet and entire body (from neck down) warm. In the house, always wear at least socks on your feet, eg. never go barefoot.
- Always wear a T-shirt to bed to keep the chest warm.
- Wear a neck warmer (like what you would wear snow skiing) to bed to keep the neck warm. (Don't wear hats to bed - oddly enough, you actually want to keep your head relatively cool, as old Chinese wisdom says.)

### **4. Sleep:**

Try to get 8+ hours of sleep. Sleep is so important for the immune system to function!

### **5. Drown the cold with water:**

Drink about 10 large glasses of water each day.

### **6. Consume these herbs:**

- **Vitamin C:** 2+ grams per day. (See note on the Traveler's method below)
- **Vitamin D3:** 2000 IU (or 90 mcg) per day. It takes a few days for the body to fully metabolize into the bloodstream as calcifediol to provide immune system benefits
- **Echinacea\*** for bacterial colds: 1 gram in the morning, 1 gram at night

- **Elderberry\*** for viruses: 3 grams / day (this stuff is hard to find). An alternative is drinking a couple glasses of **natural unsweetened cranberry juice**, and not the “fake” stuff made from cranberry juice concentrate with lots of added sugar. (Ladies: real cranberry juice also works wonders for urinary tract infections, sorry TMI !)  
 \* Elderberry in my personal experience fights viruses well, while Echinacea seems better for bacterial infections. If I don't know which I have, I take both Echinacea and Elderberry to be sure to kill the cold. In context of Covid-19, there is some confusion about risk of elderberry triggering a dangerous cytokine storm. Please at least read the bottom section on elderberry in this article <https://u.nu/eu6ju~> before using it. For me, I will use elderberry unless I start to get severe sickness or a hint of trouble breathing). Use your own judgment.
- **Zinc:** 50 milligrams per day. (Take it separately from vitamin C which is acidic)
- **Garlic:** Take garlic directly and/or eat food with LOTS of garlic. It works wonders and it's no surprise that garlic was believed to kill evil spirits in medieval times. To avoid bad breath and ensure an adequate intake of garlic, I now just take 5-8 grams of garlic extract geltab pills, which go down odorless.
- **Bi Yan Wan** for nasal congestion. This Chinese herb (pill form) works incredibly well. An alternative I used to use is alfalfa leaf, 2 grams/day, but it's very hard to find.

#### **Travelers Kill-a-Cold Recipe (a possible alternative):**

- A friend told me about his own very simple recipe in 2013 just using vitamin C. As soon as you feel a cold coming on, start taking 500 mg of vitamin C every half hour, like clockwork, until you feel all better. I've tried this a couple of times and it's seemed to work OK. Because it is simple and easy to do in any situation, I call this the “Traveler's Kill-a-Cold recipe”. If you couple vitamin C here with the other techniques here (items 1-5), then the complicated herbs in section 6 (Echinacea, zinc, elderberry, etc.) might be less critical in some situations.
- Note: There are mixed opinions about vitamin C. [Many studies \(https://u.nu/0ebc3\)](https://u.nu/0ebc3) refute the benefits of vitamin C, and a credible doctor friend is emphatic of that, and cautions fairly that excessive vitamin C can lead to painful kidney stones. However, some studies show some benefits in context of heavy athletic / aerobic exercise, and another of our doctors claims vitamin C is an antioxidant that can help to counter oxidative stress that may result from extremely severe viral infections, so there may be some actual mechanism at play. I'm not a doctor, so use your own judgment.

#### **Excellent tips about airplane and train travel:**

A common concern about airplane travel is getting sick from recirculated air. But apparently that concern is largely a myth. The real risk is bacteria and viruses that contaminate your tray table, the bathrooms, and commonly touched areas on your seat. The #1 thing you can do to travel safely is to use hand sanitizer and/or sanitizing wipes to liberally wipe down at risk surfaces. This article has the full and fascinating details: <https://io9.gizmodo.com/why-you-really-get-sick-on-planes-and-how-to-prevent-1471880458>

Personal Waiver: This “recipe” is just a suggestion. You are responsible for your own choices. I do not claim official medical expertise and I am not a doctor. Here are some other comments to keep in mind...

- If you are pregnant or nursing, I would be cautious with echinacea since I have seen an article cautioning against combining these. I have also seen a recommendation not to take elderberry if you are pregnant or nursing.
- If you have never taken echinacea, it's not a bad idea to take just 1 gram or 500 milligrams to start with. It's a very common herbal remedy available at any drugstore, but I once read on the internet that it may cause (typically minor) allergy-like immune system reactions in rare instances.