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Got a Cold – Should You Work Out?

By Michael Stefano

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A recent study sponsored by the American College of Sports Medicine indicates that exercising moderately while you have a common cold doesn't affect the severity or duration of the symptoms.

It's a widely excepted notion that exercising and keeping in shape will reduce your risk of getting sick, but nothing has been previously documented to demonstrate whether working out while suffering from a cold would reduce or intensify the symptoms.

The common cold affects us all, with the average American getting sick up to six times a year, but will exercising when you're not feeling well, increase or decrease your ability to battle the illness, and reduce symptoms?

The study, headed by Thomas G. Weidner, Ph.D., Ball State University in Munice Indiana, involved 50 moderately fit student volunteers, who were divided randomly into two groups: exercising and non-exercising. Each volunteer was injected with the cold germs, and tracked for a ten-day period.

The subjects all kept a daily log of physical activity. The exercise group worked out either by running, biking or using a step machine for 40 minutes every day, at no more than seventy per cent of their maximum capacity (measured by heart rate reserve).

Upon completion of the study and after analysis of exercise data, symptom severity, and actual mucous weight measurements, there was shown to be no significant difference in symptom severity or duration in the exercise group or in their inactive counterparts.

The study revealed that exercising at a moderate intensity level does not intensify cold symptoms or compromise the immune system. It seems that a moderate level of intensity is not enough to alter immune response.

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Reader beware, high intensity exercise such as heavy weight lifting or high intensity aerobic training has been shown to have a negative impact on the immune system during a cold or any respiratory infection.

Symptom to Exercise Guidelines:

Runny nose, sneezing, scratchy throat only Safe to exercise at low intensity levels.

Fever, dry cough, sore muscles, vomiting, diarrhea Exercise not recommended, resume more intense physical activity when cold, or infection is gone.

Michael Stefano is a captain on the New York City Fire Department, as well as author of The Firefighter's Workout Book, The 30-minute-a-day, Train-for-life Program for Men and Women. He is also managing editor, and writer of many articles on health and fitness at

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(where you can sign up for a FREE Train For Life Newsletter). Michael Stefano's articles have appeared on such internet giants as America On Line, Yahoo!, and eDiets.com

Cold And Flu Defense

By Andrew Cavanagh

Cold And Flu Defense

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Cold and Flu defense can be simple, natural and healthy.

The simplest, most effective, proven cold and flu defense is hygiene.

More specifically paying special attention to the way you wash your hands and other neglected but simple natural hygiene therapies like nasal irrigation.

Most people think viruses fly through the air then into your nose or mouth. If that were true then the best cold and flu defense would be vitamin C and anti-viral drugs.

But viruses like the cold and flu don't fly - they hitchhike.

You usually pick up droplets of a cold or flu virus from hand to hand contact or from objects like doorknobs, telephones or tables.

Over 90% of cold and flu viruses enter your body when you touch your eyes or your nose with your

fingernails.

So cold and flu defense rule number one – don't touch your face with your hands.

Your fingernails carry more viruses like the cold and flu than any other part of your body.

The skin under your fingernails lack the horny layer that protects other skin on your body. Combine this with the actual nail and you create a safe, warm place for cold and flu viruses and bacteria to survive.

Washing your fingernails regularly is crucial as a first line of cold and flu defense.

Regular, effective hand washing helps reduce your chance of inoculating yourself with a cold or flu virus and helps you avoid passing a cold or flu virus on to someone you know through hand to hand contact.

So cold and flu virus defense rule number two - wash your hands regularly and pay special attention to washing your fingernails.

Using hand washing as an effective first line of cold and flu defense can be more complicated than it seems on the surface.

You need to use the right kind of soap and you can make several potentially dangerous mistakes when you wash your hands.

Also washing your hands is just the beginning.

Other therapies like nasal irrigation are vital if you want natural, powerful cold and flu defense...

Read the free report on natural cold and flu defense and how to protect yourself from other killer viruses like the bird flu at

For more details on cold and flu defense

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