

HEALTH



W E L L N E S S



**Potential Benefits
of a Vegan Diet**

**Reap the Benefits of
Physcial Therapy**

October 2018
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Fight the Flu with These Strategies

Influenza can rear its head any time of the year, but is known to be a particularly bad thorn in one's side during times of year when the weather is cold. According to WebMD, anywhere from 5 to 20 percent of the population will get the flu in an average year and it can take three to seven days for a regular case of the illness to go away, with some effects lingering for up to two weeks.

No one wants to get the flu, which is marked by fever, aches and pains, congestion, fatigue, and other symptoms. As a result, people do all they can to help prevent the flu — or at the very least shorten its duration.

The best way to stave off the flu is to get a flu vaccination each year. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says the vaccine is carefully curated to treat against the flu strains that research suggests will be the most common each flu season. Getting vaccinated by the end of October is recommended.

Steer clear of sick individuals and make a concerted effort to avoid germs and the spread of germs. Diligently washing hands and avoiding touching your nose, eyes and mouth can help you avoid and spread germs. In addition, repeatedly clean and disinfect surfaces that may be contaminated with the flu virus.

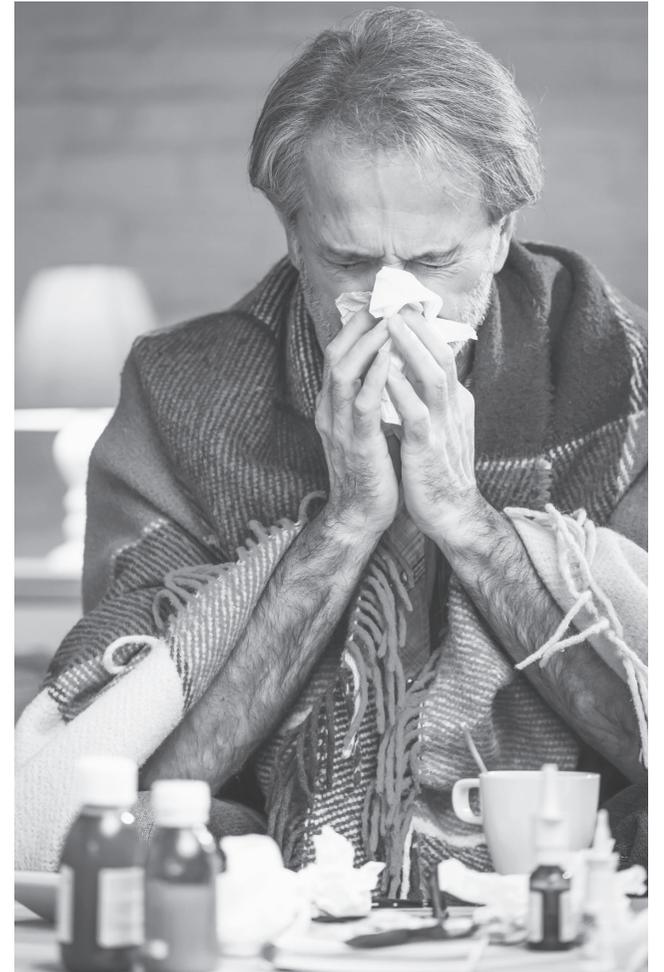
You might want to consider prophylactic treatment

with an antiviral medication. In 2000, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the use of oseltamivir phosphate, which is known by the brand name Tamiflu, as a flu preventative. However, many people only reach for the drug when symptoms already have set in. Instead, it can be especially helpful in preventing the flu when someone in the household has already contracted the illness. The results of several clinical studies show that Tamiflu, when taken once daily, is up to 92 percent effective in preventing influenza illness in adolescents, adults and the elderly.

Drink plenty of liquids during flu season to keep the body well hydrated so the immune system can be in top form. Fruit juices, water, broth-based soups, and sports drinks can help keep the respiratory system from forming thick mucus that can become laden with bacteria. Should a fever set in, fluids help prevent dehydration.

It also can be wise to take zinc supplements during cold and flu season. Neil Schachter, MD, medical director of the respiratory care department at Mount Sinai Medical Center and the author of "The Good Doctor's Guide to Colds & Flu," says zinc may boost immunity, which can shorten the duration or severity of the flu.

The flu can quickly escalate and cause serious symptoms. Prevention and early treatment are essential during cold and flu season.



Did You Know?

Antibiotics are not effective in preventing or treating the flu. Antibiotics are used when bacteria is the cause of illnesses and help kill bacteria or stop them from reproducing, indicates Medline Plus.

Influenza is a viral infection, meaning antibiotics will be useless against it. The only times when antibiotics may be prescribed during a flu illness is if flu symptoms have contributed to secondary or tertiary illnesses, such as strep throat or ear infections.

Requesting antibiotics without the presence of a bacterial infection will not help a person feel better faster, and taking antibiotics unnecessarily could compound the growing problem of antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria.



Potential Benefits of a Vegan Diet

A nutritious diet is an integral component of a healthy lifestyle. One of the great things about eating right is there are many ways to do so. A healthy diet that works for some people might not work for others with different tastes, and it doesn't have to.

Eating right can boost immune systems and help people be more productive, and some people even tailor their healthy diets to align with their personal beliefs. One such example is veganism. Adherents to veganism do not eat or use animal products, and many do so to advocate for the ethical treatment of animals.

Regardless of why people choose vegan diets, the potential health benefits of such decisions are myriad.

- **Improve kidney function:** Studies have indicated that people with diabetes who replace the meat in their diets with plant protein may reduce their risk for poor kidney function. One such study, published in the Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition,

concluded that, while more studies are necessary, substituting soy protein for animal proteins usually decreases hyperfiltration in diabetic subjects and may reduce albumin excretion as well.

- **Protect against certain cancers:** The World Health Organization says that roughly one-third of all instances of cancer across the globe can be prevented if people make the right lifestyle choices. That includes their choice in diets. Due to the nature of vegan diets, vegans tend to consume considerable amounts of fruits and vegetables. That's good news, as an analysis of data from the Health Survey for England found that eating seven or more portions of fresh fruits and vegetables every day can reduce a person's risk of dying from cancer by as much as 15 percent.
- **Reduce risk for heart disease:** Fruits, vegetables and fiber also have been linked to a lower risk of



heart disease. A study from researchers in Japan found that intakes of plant-based foods, particularly fruits, were associated with reduced mortality from cardiovascular disease.

Vegan diets may necessitate an adjustment period when starting out. But over time, the benefits of such diets are numerous.



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Reap the Benefits of Physical Therapy

Injuries have the potential to sideline people for weeks, months or permanently. Injury to the body can occur when participating in organized sports, fitness regimens or even after being in an accident.

Recovering from incidents that can impact mobility and range of motion takes time, but physical therapy can help the body acclimate to regular activity once more. Physical therapy also can help healthy people as well.

Those who have suffered a sprain or a broken bone or even spent a duration of time immobile in the hospital due to an illness are often prescribed physical therapy as part of their follow-up treatment. Physical therapy programs try to progressively increase strength, improve mobility and help the body return to a state where it can function as best as possible. In many cases, a person can regain his or her original capabilities.

According to the American Physical Therapy Association, a physical therapist is a trained and licensed medical professional who has the experience to diagnose physical abnormalities, restore physical function and mobility, maintain that function, and promote proper form for future activity. Physical therapy sessions can take place in hospitals, rehabilitation centers, fitness settings, private practices, and much more.

Not only can physical therapists react to and treat an injury, but they can also teach exercises, stretches and techniques to help prevent problems in the first place. Experts at Bay State Physical Therapy indicate that physical therapy extends beyond disabled or injured people. Physical therapists can educate a person on weaknesses in the body and can guide correction on poor body mechanics that cause pain. This way a person can make changes to prevent future pain and injury. Rather than being reactionary, healthy individuals can take a proactive approach to avoiding pain and injury.

When one opts for physical therapy, he or she may:

- Undergo a physical exam and evaluation of pain, movement, flexibility, and performance
- Receive a clinical diagnosis and plan of care
- Establish long-term goals
- Participate in physical therapy treatment, which may include stretching, movement and weight-bearing activities based on the therapist's guidance
- Be given at-home work to further progress in between sessions.

While physical therapy can be used for recovery from strokes or paralysis,



injuries, trauma, and musculoskeletal conditions, it also benefits healthy people. For example, women can use physical therapy to learn exercises that may prevent pelvic floor dysfunction. In addition, physical therapy can teach people how to improve their balance and prevent falls.

When people hear about physical therapy, they tend to think it is for people with injuries. While physical therapists can help heal injured parts of the body, physical therapy continues to evolve to assist with overall wellness.



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