



Dear Doctors,

I am interested in ways to prevent getting sick this winter. Last winter I came down with bronchitis twice and it seemed I did not get over it until the end of spring. This left me exhausted until the middle of summer. This fall I got sick again and I am afraid that this whole process is starting all over again. What can I do?

DJ

Dear DJ,

It sounds like you have a tendency towards lower respiratory infections. The lower respiratory system is from the throat down as opposed to the upper respiratory system which is from the throat up. Other than the flu vaccine there is little available from conventional medicine to prevent upper and lower respiratory infections. The flu vaccine works on specific viruses but not all viruses and not in cases of bacterial illnesses. There are steps you can take to prevent respiratory illnesses from occurring. First you must prevent the illnesses from entering your body. Immune system integrity is key here and using a supplement that contains some of the following: andrographis, elderberry, astagalus and maitake (notice no echinacea here) can help prevent the flu. A great product that comes to mind is Blockade, a high tech yet herbal product that can actually prevent viruses from entering your body. Oregon grape, coptis, oregano, and goldenseal are all geared towards preventing bacterial infections as well as many of the mushroom supplements on the market. The herbs kill bacteria and the mushrooms stimulate your immune system. Then there is the world of Chinese herbal medicine which has a 2,000 year old tradition of managing respiratory illnesses. These formulas are tailored on a custom basis to match the symptoms presented by each patient but two formulas which work well are Yin Chiao to ease the onset of a virus and Jade Windscreen Powder for an acute exacerbation of chronic bronchitis. There are also dietary considerations that can reduce your susceptibility to respiratory infection but they are best done in a clinical setting or maybe in another Dear Doctor.

Yours in Health,
Dr. Ervolino

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