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On The First Signs of Illness

Note: This information is not intended to replace a physician/patient contact. It is for general purposes only.

When a person first catches a virus or bacteria, a quick and efficient immune response is needed to fight off the infection. Depending on how well the body mounts this response, a person can get sick, or they can recover quickly with minimal symptoms.

I have found that there are several nutritional supplements that if started on the very first signs of illness, or after direct exposure to someone who is ill, can significantly reduce how sick a person gets and how long they have symptoms for. Early treatment is the key. Once a person has been sick for a day or two, the recommendations listed below may be helpful in strengthening the immune system so a person does not catch a second infection, but the first infection will probably last the normal duration.

While I have found these therapies to be very safe and effective, there are a few circumstances that I would like to mention that warrant further medical evaluation:

Any baby under 8 weeks old with a fever over 100.5 needs immediate medical attention. These youngest children are more prone to getting serious bacterial infections and a thorough examination and lab evaluation is warranted.

- Any fever over 104.5F with no other signs of illness (ie no cough, runny nose or intestinal symptoms) could be a sign of bacterial infection and should be evaluated, especially in younger children.
- Any fever that last more than 5 days should be evaluated.
- Any sign of respiratory distress, such as rapid breathing, labored breathing, difficulty catching one's breath, or nasal flaring should be evaluated immediately.

Any associated urinary symptoms such as pain with urination, increased urine frequency, or blood in the urine warrants an evaluation for a urinary tract infection

Any associated mental status changes, confusion, or lethargy warrants immediate evaluation. Giving a single dose of a fever reducer such as ibuprofen (preferably) or acetaminophen (i.e. Tylenol) to see if this improves the symptoms would be acceptable, but if not rapidly improving, immediate medical attention is needed

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1) Vitamin A - in a mycelized natural or palmitate form, (instead of one that is mostly Beta Carotene) in my experience is the single most important therapy for fighting infections. If only one therapy could be used, this would be my choice. High doses should never be used for more than 2 days in a row unless directed by a physician. The liver can be damaged if used for long periods of time at these doses. The dosing provided here is anecdotal, based upon my and other

doctor's experience. Studies have not been done to confirm them. The dosing per age is as follows (per dose): for children under 6 months, 10,000 IU. Children 6-12 mo 15,000 IU. Children 12-24 month 20,000 IU. Children 2-3 years 25,000-30,000 IU. Children 4-5 years 40,000IU. Children 6-7 years 50,000 IU. Children 7-10 75,000 IU, children 11-14 100,000 IU, and people 15 and older 150,000 IU. These doses are to be used twice a day for 2 days only. These high doses may be problematic for people with clotting difficulty or liver disease. It is advisable to give/take a ½ dose when not sick to make sure it is tolerated. There are both liquid drops and capsules available. Do not use this as a daily preventative.

2) Vitamin C- preferably as Ester or Buffered C. Doses listed here are the total amount per day and should be divided in 3-4 doses. For children under 1 year of age give 100mg per month of age. For children up to age 5, 1000mg per year of age, and as much as possible for older children and adults, as long as the stool does not become loose. Use this dose for 10-14 days, even if symptoms resolve sooner, as it can prevent catching a second illness

3) Zinc - children under 1 year old give 10-15mg a day, children between 1 and 3 give 20-30 mg daily, older children 50mg a day, and adults can take 75-100 mg a day. This should be divided into 2-3 doses through the day. Zinc can also be taken as a daily preventive, 5-10 mg per day for younger children, and up to 20mg daily for adults.

4) Larix/Echinacea - These herbs have a similar active ingredient called arabinogalactan which is believed to increase production of white blood cells. Larix has been found to be much stronger than Echinacea when using similar amounts, and can be used by patients over 6 months of age. For adults and older children, the dose is 2 tablets 3 times a day, and younger children who can swallow pills should take 1 tablet 3 times a day. There is also a powder available. Adults and large children should use 1 tablespoon 3 times a day, and smaller children should use 1 tsp 3 times a day. For children less than 6 months of age, there are alcohol free extracts of Echinacea that can be used. For children under 3 months of age use 5 drops 4 times a day and for children 3-6 months use 10 drops 4 times a day. Echinacea should not be used as a daily preventative, but adults and larger children can take Larix 1 tablet twice a day, and smaller children (under 5) ½ tsp twice a day through the flu season. The doses for Echinacea are as follows:

2-6 months of age: 5 drops 4x a day
6-12 months: 10 drops 4x a day
1 – 2 years old– 15 drops 4 times daily
2 – 4 years – 20 drops 4 times daily
4 – 6 years – 25 drops 4 times daily



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Use the listed doses for the vitamin C, zinc and Larix/ Echinacea for 10-14 days, even if symptoms resolve sooner, as it can prevent catching a second illness.

Please be aware that these therapies have not been evaluated in large, multi-centered studies. One must always weigh the risks and benefits of each therapy on an individualized basis. Please contact our office if there are any questions or if any issues were to arise.