

YOU & Improved

Health, heart, happiness – how to supersize your life



Flu? That's so 2011

5

ways to beat a cold this winter

As a Harvard School of Public Health study reveals that Brits are the worst at taking basic anti-flu precautions such as washing our hands or sneezing into a tissue (eek!) here are our top tips to staying phlegm-free

1 GET A FLU JAB
 If you're not entitled to a free NHS vaccination, Asda's offering them to customers over 16 for just £7 – 40 per cent cheaper than at Boots. Available at 234 Asda pharmacies nationwide, it's a sensible way to prevent illness before winter really sets in.

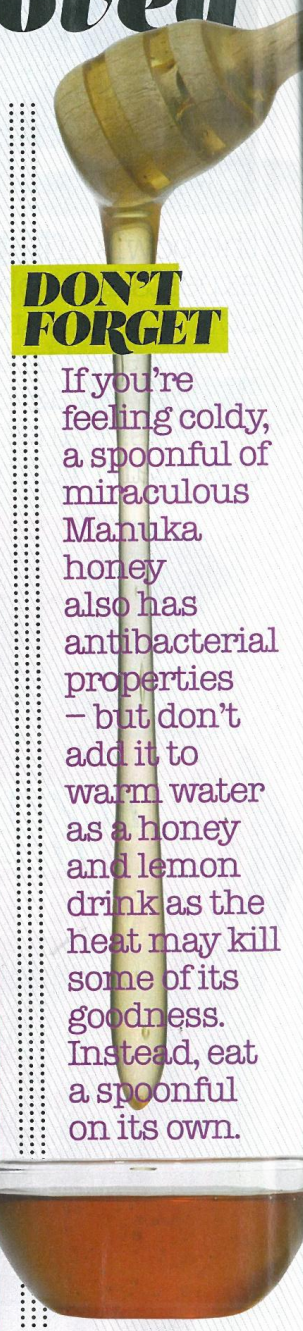
2 USE A HAND GEL
 Soap and water is still the best way to kill off bacteria, but if you're on the go you can't beat a hand gel. Pop a travel-size Milton Antibacterial Hand Gel (£2.19, available from chemists) into your handbag – it contains 72 per cent alcohol to tackle those virus-causing germs.

3 TAKE ECHINACEA
 It's not just Now's Editor who swears by echinacea at the first sign of a sniffle – celebs such as Jennifer Aniston love it too. A recent study suggests that as well as decreasing the odds of catching a cold, taking it can also shorten the cold's duration. Try Nature's Best Echinacea (£10.95 for 60 tablets, naturesbest.co.uk), which is four times stronger than other high street brands and doesn't leave a bitter aftertaste.

4 TRY A PROBIOTIC
 Probiotics are best known for aiding digestion and a healthy gut, but clinical trials show they can also help reduce the risk of a cold

by boosting your immunity. Lepicol (£11.98, Holland & Barrett, Boots and Waitrose) is a three-in-one combination of soluble plant fibre psyllium husks, the prebiotic inulin and probiotic cultures.

5 GO FOR SOMETHING STRONGER
 New Sambucol Extra Defence syrup (£9.99, sambucol.co.uk and health food stores) is being touted as the most powerful non-prescription flu treatment available in the UK. Its magic ingredient is antioxidant-rich black elderberry, which contains an 'AntiVirin' that's shown to prevent the cold virus invading your healthy cells.



DON'T FORGET

If you're feeling coldy, a spoonful of miraculous Manuka honey also has antibacterial properties – but don't add it to warm water as a honey and lemon drink as the heat may kill some of its goodness. Instead, eat a spoonful on its own.