

**Featured Topic: Cold and Flu
Stopper - Elderberry
(4 slides)**

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Viral Illnesses

- Influenza (the flu) and the common cold, as well as shingles, herpes, and some types of hepatitis and pneumonia are caused by **viruses**
 - **Did you know?** The influenza virus can survive as long as 48 hours on stainless steel or hard plastic; survival on cloth, paper, or tissues is about 8-10 hours
- You should know: **antibiotics DO NOTHING to stop cold and flu viruses**
- However, several natural medicines have powerful effects against viruses

Elderberry is a natural antiviral drug

- Elderberry acts against viruses in two ways:
 - PRIMARY: neutralizes virus particles so that they cannot enter host cells
 - SECONDARY: causes the immune system to activate, which can help control the spread of a viral infection
- Specifically, elderberry has been found effective against
 - **Influenza Type A and B**
 - Herpes type 1
 - HIV
- BONUS: Elderberry has ALSO been shown to have some **antibacterial** activity

Elderberry protects against cold and flu

- A recent study in Australia found that taking elderberry while traveling **cuts risk of colds or the flu in half**
- 312 passengers flying from Australia to overseas destinations, economy class
 - Half received Haschberg variety elderberry extract; half received placebo
 - All passengers surveyed for cold and flu symptoms before, during and after their flights
- The elderberry group had **half as many illness** (cold or flu) as the placebo group
- For those in the elderberry group who did get sick, their **illness lasted only 2/3 as long** as the placebo group, and their **symptoms were not as severe**

Stop viral infections with elderberry

- Elderberry can be taken daily, especially during cold and flu season
- 200 mg daily, up to 1200 mg (when needed)
- Blend with other immune nutrients:
 - Vitamins A, C and D
 - Zinc, Calcium, Magnesium
 - Mixed bioflavonoids from citrus
- Other ways to stop a virus:
 - High dose vitamin D3
 - Supplemental vitamin D (1200 IU daily) in school children helped reduce the incidence of type A flu (influenza) by 8%
 - Looking **only at children who had NO supplemental vitamin D** prior to the study, the risk of infection was reduced **almost 60%**
 - Propolis extract (100 -200 mg of concentrated propolis daily)

Live Longer on an Anti-inflammatory Diet (1 slide)

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To live longer, eat less inflammation-inducing foods

- Researchers followed over 68,000 Swedish men and women for 16 years, tracking whether they ate anti- or pro-inflammatory foods
 - Anti-inflammatory foods included: fruits and vegetables, tea and coffee, olive oil, nuts, chocolate, moderate amounts of red wine and beer
 - Pro-inflammatory foods included: processed red meats, chips, soda
- Results: Participants who ate the most anti-inflammatory diets had
 - 18% lower risk of dying from any cause
 - 20% lower risk of dying from heart disease
 - 13% lower risk of dying from cancer

When You Need Help to “Go” (4 slides)

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Constipation: a Common Problem

- 16% of Americans and at least **1/3 of people over age 60** experience chronic constipation
 - Constipation (as defined by the National Institutes of Health) = having three or fewer bowel movements a week **OR** bowel movements that are dry, hard, and very difficult to pass
- Constipation can also lead to other health problems
 - Hemorrhoids: pressure from accumulated stool in the bowels causes distended veins
 - Anal fissures: trying to pass large, dry, hard bowel movements can tear the skin around the anus
 - Colon and rectal cancer: studies have found that chronic constipation is associated with a **2-3 times increased risk of colon/rectal cancer**

Solution: Ayurveda

- Traditional Ayurvedic herbal blend including andrographis, gotu kola, licorice, and long pepper has been used for hundreds of years to restore and maintain normal bowel function
- NOT a laxative!
 - Many laxatives artificially stimulate intestinal contractions creating urgency, and dependence (no laxative, no bowel movement!)
- Ayurvedic herbs restore normal function by
 - increasing beneficial bacterial levels in the gut
 - reducing inflammation
 - promoting normal digestive activity

Research results

- 50 people with bowel issues (especially constipation) took a combination of traditional Ayurvedic herbs or a placebo for 28 days
- Participants kept a diary on their bowel movements (including frequency and whether bowel movements were easy or painful) as well as any gastrointestinal symptoms
- Results
 - At baseline, 12% of participants had 3 or more bowel movements a week, which increased to 72% at study end for the herbal group; no change in the placebo group
 - At baseline, no participants in the herbal group had normal bowel movements, this increased to 76% of participants at study end; there was no change in the number of participants who had normal bowel movements (4% at study beginning and 4% at study end) in the placebo group
 - Additionally, abdominal pain decreased 70%, constipation 49%, diarrhea 45%, indigestion 64%, and reflux 72% in the herbal group while there was no change in GI symptoms in the placebo group
 - No significant adverse events

What to look for:

- Safe for daily use
 - No artificial intestinal stimulation
- Combination of traditional Ayurvedic herbs: Turmeric, Greater Galangal, Andrographis, Boerhavia, Indian Laburnum, Gotu Kola, Cyperus, Licorice, East Indian Sarsaparilla, Long Pepper, Chebulic Myrobalan, Indian Tinospora, Ginger, Curry Tree
- Take 800 mg of this combination with a glass of water (8 oz) at bedtime

Should you get a DNA test? (2 slides)

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Direct to Consumer DNA tests

- If you did (or really want to) get a DNA test you aren't alone – more than 12 million people have had their DNA analyzed
- For \$99 - \$199 for most tests you can find
 - Health information: your genetic risk of certain diseases such as Alzheimer's and breast cancer, lung and liver disease, and blood clotting disorders
 - Ancestry information: the continent your ancestors were from; identification of your relatives, from your parents to distant cousins; whether you carry any Neanderthal genes
 - Some tests will even predict your athletic potential, personality, or your ideal wine

What to consider before you give up your DNA

- Most DNA testing companies **sell or give your data** to researchers
 - They promise to group data together in clusters and not give out individual data – can you trust them? What if their databases are hacked?
- Federal law prohibits employers and health insurance companies from discriminating based on genetic data
- BUT this does not necessarily apply to life insurance, disability insurance, and long-term care insurance - **insurance companies can find ways to use your genetic information against you**
- Law enforcement agencies can get your data and use it to get information about you AND people closely related to you
- Should you do a DNA test? It is worth thinking carefully first!