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Friday FACTS

6 December 2002

"Leadership, Partnership, and Championship"

Exercise More, Sneeze Less

Source: Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise, 2002; 34, 1242-1248.

Overview: ACE Fitness Matters, November/December 2002

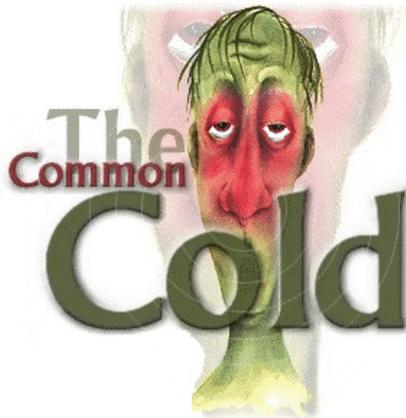
As the cold and flu season kicks into high gear this winter, it's good to know that regular exercise may be your first line of defense. Although there has been some debate about the effects of exercise on immunity, a new study suggests that being active may actually reduce the number of colds people get each year.

Researchers from the University of South Carolina in Columbia surveyed 547 healthy adults at regular intervals over the course of one year. Participants noted both their activity levels and the number of colds they had experienced. For this study, moderate or vigorous exercise was defined as anything more strenuous than a walk, including household chores and leisure activities.

The average adult will suffer through two to five colds per year. However, study participants who reported being most active had 25% fewer colds than those who were the least active.

The caveat to this study is that previous research has demonstrated that too much or too little exercise can have an adverse effect on the immune system, which could increase one's risk of developing a cold.

Marathon runners, for example, appear to be more likely to develop a cold in the week immediately following a race. The key is to strike the right balance between exercise, good nutrition and adequate sleep.



Water: A drink to your health

You've heard it a thousand times: To stay healthy, drink plenty of water. Yet, you don't do it. You're drowning in excuses—you don't like the taste; it's not convenient; you forget. No big deal, you think — it's not affecting your health.

To understand why water is so important, you have to know all that it does for your body.

Your body is one-half to four-fifths water, depending on how much body fat you have.

Water makes up more than 75 percent of your brain, about 80 percent of your blood and about 70 percent of your lean muscle.

Every system in your body depends on water. Its roles are impressive. Water:

- Regulates your body temperature
- Removes wastes
- Carries nutrients and oxygen to your cells
- Cushions your joints
- Helps prevent constipation
- Lessens the burden on your kidneys and liver by helping flush some of the toxins

• Helps dissolve vitamins, minerals and other nutrients to make them accessible to your body
Lack of water can lead to dehydration. Even mild dehydration of as little as 1 percent to 2 percent loss of your body weight can sap your energy and make you lethargic. Dehydration poses a particular health risk for the very young and very old. For more information visit:

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/invoke.cfm?id=NU00248&si=1381>



"Reflect upon your present blessing, of which every man has many— not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some. " - Charles Dickens