



## **TAKE CARE OF YOUR COLD!**

### **A GUIDE TO SELF-CARE FROM EASTERN'S HEALTH SERVICE**

Sorry you don't feel well! Colds make you feel lousy. We can't make it go away immediately, but here are some suggestions to help you feel better. Also, don't forget to cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing and wash your hands a lot to reduce the risk of infecting others.

#### **What you can do to help yourself:**

- ✓ Get lots of sleep. Your body needs rest to get better
- ✓ Drink lots of fluids to replace the fluids lost through fever or congestion
- ✓ Take a steamy shower to help loosen your respiratory secretions. If you can blow them out or cough them out, you'll feel better.
- ✓ Put a pinch of salt in a small glass of warm water and gargle frequently to relieve pain in your throat
- ✓ Drink warm fluids (like chicken soup or herbal tea with honey) to relieve sore throat and keep it from feeling dry.
- ✓ Stay in! This is not a night to go out and party!

#### **Things you can take for temporary relief:**

- ✓ Anesthetic lozenges and sprays numb a sore throat
- ✓ Acetaminophen 325mg ("Non-Aspirin"; e.g., Tylenol) relieves pain and reduces fever. *Take 2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed. Do not exceed 12 tablets in 24 hours. Be careful not to use with other acetaminophen-containing products; acetaminophen is hazardous in higher than recommended doses)*
- ✓ Ibuprofen 200mg also relieves pain and reduces fever. Do not use with other Ibuprofen products such as Motrin, Advil or with Aleve. *Normally, take 2 tablets every 4 hours. For severe pain or discomfort, you can take 3 tablets every 6 hours. Take with food.*
- ✓ Pseudoephedrine 30mg (e.g., Sudafed, an ingredient in many cold tablets but now only available behind the pharmacy counter) is a nasal decongestant that may shrink swollen membranes and decrease mucous secretions. *Take 1 or 2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed. Do not use with other nasal decongestant tablets (pseudoephedrine or phenylephrine).*
- ✓ Nasal saline spray moistens nasal secretions and helps your sinuses drain. Use freely.
- ✓ Nasal decongestant spray (Afrin or store generic brands) help to dry up a runny or stuffy nose. *Use 2 sprays in each nostril every 12 hours as needed. DO NOT USE FOR MORE THAN THREE CONSECUTIVE DAYS.*
- ✓ Combination products containing ingredients such as acetaminophen, chlorpheniramine, diphenhydramine, phenylephrine, etc.) sometimes try to do everything at once. *Follow the package directions for specific dosing, but do not use with other medications containing the same ingredients.*
- ✓ Expectorant/suppressant cough syrup (Robitussin DM; contains guaifenesin 100mg, dextromethorphan 10mg)) promotes a less frequent, more productive cough. *Take 2 teaspoonfuls every 4 hours as needed for cough. Do not use with other dextromethorphan containing medications unless advised otherwise.*

**Antibiotics are not effective in curing a viral infection such as a cold. A typical cold will last 10-14 days. If your symptoms last longer than this, or if you have a fever for more than a few days, or if you are having trouble breathing, please make an appointment to see us.**

**If you'd like to make an appointment, or if you have questions, call 465-5263.**

