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Beating the Winter Blues, Naturally

This winter, do you have decreased energy throughout the day, decreased interest in work or other activities, decreased ability to concentrate, or an increased appetite with carbohydrate cravings? These may all be signs of **Seasonal Affective Disorder**, known as SAD. SAD is a type of depression that is triggered by the diminishment of light during the shorter days and longer nights of winter. There may be a genetic factor that contributes to the development of SAD. Extreme northern latitudes, where the climate is colder and the nights are longer, have increased incidences of SAD, although Icelandic rates are lower, perhaps because of increased amounts of fish in Icelandic diets. **Light box therapy** has been proven significantly effective in improving SAD, when used 30 minutes per day, preferably in the morning. This therapy mimics outdoor light (full



spectrum), helping to release endorphins, serotonin, and epinephrine in the brain, all neurotransmitters that help to promote feelings of happiness. A **dawn simulation machine**, which mimics the arrival of light resembling a sunrise has been shown

to be 83% more effective than light box therapy, and is another option. **Regular exercise**, 30 minutes daily, 5-7 days per week, not only lifts the spirits through endorphin release, but increases circulation and supports cardiovascular health. Increasing your **outdoor activity**, especially on sunny days, brings you light and movement benefits simultaneously. Increasing fish and fish liver oils in your diet may also

prove useful, along with other food sources of **Vitamin D**, such as eggs, beef liver, and fortified dairy products or cereals. For further support with symptoms of SAD, consult your naturopathic doctor.

Dr. Robin DiPasquale, Madison, WI

Treating the Cause: A Patient Testimonial

Before beginning naturopathic care with Dr. Kunkler, my mental health was in a state of emergency. I was suffering from panic attacks, insomnia, heart palpitations, suicidal thoughts, irritability, and feelings of hopelessness. **I was diagnosed with Bipolar II** and prescribed Seroquel, which only made me feel exhausted and sedated.

Now, 2 years later, under naturopathic care, I am feeling better than I have since before puberty. I feel about 15 years younger. Dr. Kunkler diagnosed

the true cause of my problems: food allergies. I have avoided my highly reactive foods including dairy, eggs, sesame, and cane sugar for over a year, and I continue to feel better every week. The psychiatrist dismissed me from care and I have been off all prescription medications for the past year. I now have a positive outlook about my future, which has replaced feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness. I find it almost impossible to believe that **I am so happy and calm**, and know that I will con-

tinue to feel this way. Happiness in the past was not very deep or long-lasting. My relationship with my husband is better than ever and will continue to grow positively. I have learned to reduce my stress levels, and find that I am not stressed by the same things that I used to be. This stress reduction is helping me stay healthy and live each day more fully.

*Patient of
Dr. Karen Kunkler, Madison, WI*

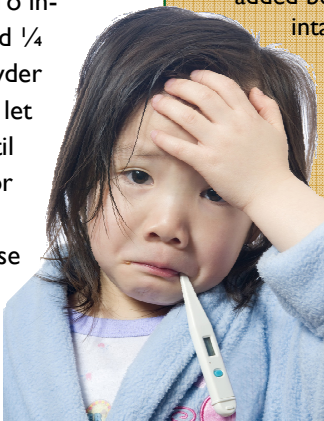
Beating the Bug: Children's Home Remedies

Did you know that a fever may be good for your child? During a fever, the body's increased temperature helps to prevent viruses from growing in the body and speeds up the immune system's ability to kill viruses or bacteria. Here are some favorite naturopathic therapies to use if your child becomes ill:

Warming Socks – After soaking the child's cotton socks in cold water, wring out the socks completely, and put them on the feet, followed by a pair of dry wool socks.

The cool, moist socks will stimulate the child's immune system, and the socks will be warm and dry by morning.

Ginger Bath – To increase a fever, add ¼ cup of ginger powder to a hot bath and let the child soak until their fever rises or they become uncomfortable. Rinse the child gently by pouring cooler water over their head,



and then wrap the child in blankets and put to bed. To increase the fever even more, offer the child yarrow or ginger tea to drink.

Steam Inhalation - Herbal steams can be used to warm and decongest the nose, sinuses, and throat, and calm coughs. Run a hot shower to fill the bathroom with steam. Add 5-10 drops of essential oil (any combination of thyme, eucalyptus, hyssop or peppermint) to a steam vaporizer and position the child close (but

no closer than 18 inches to avoid any burns) to the steam. While keeping the shower running, sit in the room with the child for 10-15 minutes.

Although fevers are generally beneficial, they can also cause dehydration, so always make sure that your child is drinking plenty of fluids. Do not let a fever rise above 104 degrees (or 100 degrees in a child under age 1).

Dr. Aaron Henkel, Madison, WI

Natural Flu Prevention: Immunization Alternatives

There has been much anxiety this flu season about the potential dangers of H1N1 flu. In reassurance, H1N1 causes a mild illness in most individuals, and there are several natural alternatives to immunization. **Elderberry** has traditionally been used as an anti-viral herb and research has shown its effectiveness in treating seasonal flu. In lab experiments, elderberry has also been found to prevent H1N1 infection by binding to the virus and preventing it from infecting cells. An added benefit of elderberry is its delicious taste and high antioxidant content. **Vitamin D** intake has been shown to reduce the likelihood that mice will contract H1N1. Several studies have also suggested that vitamin D may increase resistance to seasonal flu strain in humans. NDs have reported success using **homeopathic H1N1 nosode** (a remedy made from actual killed virus that is highly diluted so it does not contain the virus) to prevent H1N1. Other flu remedies are nux vomica, cinchona officinalis, and arsenicum album. **Oscillocochinum** can also be taken preventively or during illness. A recent study conducted in Madison, WI and published in *Pediatrics*, found that children who were given **probiotics** twice daily for 6 months had half the rate of fever and acute illness compared to children who had not taken probiotics during that time. The group that was given both forms of probiotics, *Lactobacillus acidophilus* with *Bifidobacterium animalis*, fared the best, with a 68% decrease in rate of illness, an 84% less need for antibiotic use, and fewer school absences than the group not taking probiotics. -*Shelly Smekens, ND Student*