

STATETIMES

SUNDAY

Your Companion for a Funday

Suffering from the flu? Top ways to recover faster

Amidst an active threat of COVID-19, flu cases are rising rampantly. And unlike previous seasons, this year's influenza season is severe, lingering on for longer for those who do contract it. Studies have also found that there's a high likelihood of developing long flu, much like long COVID.

Now, while flu may be a routine illness which we have been routinely exposed to, and does not have a strict isolation norm like COVID requires, it's still very much important that we treat flu symptoms seriously, and do not delay any diagnosis or symptoms of concern.

Flu is a major respiratory infection wherein symptoms start to come up 2-5 days post contraction. Now, while most of the symptoms are very similar to that of a cold, allergies, or even COVID-19, the symptoms in itself could linger on for 5-7 days. In more severe cases, wherein an individual might be suffering from a pre-existing, immunosuppressant condition, it could take considerably longer to fight the infection. In most cases, a full recovery happens within 2 weeks. However, one can still continue to feel from some symptoms, or feel weak or drained, even if the infection has been successfully fought off.

Having said that, while a usual recovery plan relies on symptomatic treatment, rest and recovery, here are a few helpful ways to recover faster from the flu, and relieve symptoms:

Firstly, stay home and do not venture out

Now, while we do stress that flu is relatively less contagious than COVID-19, it's still advisable to stay at home, and avoid stepping out till the time the infection symptoms have reduced considerably. Staying home, ample rest and sleep are the best strategies to fight the flu naturally.

Simply said, when you are recuperating from the flu, the body's very fragile, and if you do step out or engage in routine tasks, not only do you risk spreading the symptoms onto others, but also would feel a lot weaker, and stressed, which can ultimately prolong recovery. It's also advisable that when you do interact with others, or have respiratory symptoms like the cough or cold, a mask is used to reduce transmission risk.

Hydrate yourself well

Dehydration can be a complication which can stem from fighting a flu, especially when you are not too careful about your diet or your hydration levels. Therefore, one way to hasten up your recovery is to have ample of drinks- nourishing, soothing and hydrating drinks, which would also feel relieving for the throat and clear sinuses up.

During your recovery, ensure that you have at least 1-2 litres of water without fail, and increase your intake of ORS fluids as well. However, do keep your consumption of caffeinated beverages to the bare minimum since they can further dehydrate you.

Take flu medications wisely

While battling the flu can be a very routine illness, we also have a lot of easily available OTC medications to fight the flu. However, the medications can greatly differ, and it's important not to self-medicate upon getting sick. Take medications according to what your current symptoms are, and only after checking with a doc-



tor.

There are also a lot of antivirals available to fight the flu, which can be consulted before use. The need for antivirals also greatly vary, and depend on a case-by-case basis.

Attend to pre-existing conditions, if any

Flu can prove to be a bigger threat if you already suffer from a condition like diabetes, high B.P. or heart disease. While such risk factors require more precise care, a viral infection could also disturb vital health parameters, spike up blood sugar levels or raise cholesterol levels (because of the foods you eat, or missing medications). Hence, it's always advised that someone who has diabetes or high B.P. keep monitoring their vitals even more frequently when they have the flu, take all necessary medications. The more you are in control over your preconditions, the better and easier it would be to fight the flu.

Add moisture in the room

When you have the flu, it can be quite uncomfortable to have a blocked nose, sinus issues which could make it difficult to breathe properly. To avoid such problems, it's advisable to add some form of moisture to the room you're resting in. Try taking a hot shower, doing steam inhalation, using a humidifier to do so. While sleeping, doctors also advise adding a pillow to take the pressure off the sinuses, which will also provide more rest.

Have foods which are easy on your stomach

Encountering digestive troubles when you are fighting the flu can be very common, and most times, when you have a terrible case of the flu, proper eating habits go for a toss. It's important to thus have meals and foods which are light and easy on the stomach, and equally nourishing. Traditional staples like oatmeal, soup, khichdi, dal are all easy and healthy. What you should also be concentrating on is filling up on nutrients which can assist the immune system in speedier recovery. Therefore, try to take in as much Vitamin C, antioxidants, zinc and protein through your meals (fruits, veggies, pulses and legumes) to recover faster.

Avoid these foods when you are sick

Anything oily, greasy, spicy, fried or processed is best kept away when you are fighting the flu. What you eat plays a very essential role, and loading up on unhealthy, or foods which are heavier for your body to digest may not bode well. Also avoid having too much of sugary drinks, and if you are a diabetic, be careful to look over at the medications and cough syrups, since there could be extra sugar hiding in them.

While a flu infection tends to get better in a week or ten days for most people, the infection can also turn severe for people and worsen without notice. The flu actually has a high rate of mortality. Therefore, those with a weak immune system should be careful and be on the lookout for these signs and symptoms of worsening health:

- Dehydration
- Dizziness, confusion, delirium
- Abdominal pain
- Swelling and rashes.

Simple decor tips to impress your in-laws this festive season



As the festive season approaches, there is a lot of excitement, nervousness, and anxiety that can strike you together when your in-laws visit for the first time. From preparing a good meal to dressing up perfectly, doing everything perfectly becomes a rigorous task! Setting up your home at this time should be one of your main priorities because you will surely want your in-laws to praise you for maintaining such a beautiful home. But keeping the space spotless yet decorative can be tricky and exhausting. But worry not, here are effective methods to set up your home this Diwali to win your spot in their best books!

Bring homely feel with rugs

The first crucial thing you need is to make your home comfy and cosy. Make your in-laws feel more comfortable and welcomed, and you have set a positive tone for the visit. Add a rug to specific places such as at the entrance and living room. This will help you make a good first impression. So, invest in good quality rugs of complementing designs. If you wish to add luxury, you can go for classical, vintage or Persian carpets. But if you expect heavy traffic of guests along with the in-laws, go for something durable yet comfortable such as polypropylene and nylon carpets.

Enhance your bathroom

No doubt that living rooms are a priority when it comes to impressing someone. But a secret key also lies in your bathroom. That is one place whose cleanliness, organization, and safety can give you extra points from your in-laws. So, clean it properly and make sure to place an anti-skid bath mat, modern bath sets and a bin in the bath. Anti-skid mats are especially useful for the elderly and they can feel safer using the bathroom.

Upgrade your tableware

The dining table is the final melting pot of the entire family, and a neatly organised table is what you need to get the impression you want. Essentials like butter dish, napkin holder, salt and pepper sprinkler, sugar jar, toothpick holder, wine opener and finally the table mat for the plates are a must for a well-organised dining table. And finally, do not miss the touch of elegance with modern ceramic and acrylic tableware.

Focus on your lights

When the elderly visit your home, make sure you don't have glaring lights switched on. This can be a problem for their eyesight as most elders face eye problems with increasing age. Investing in a dim light system will add an elegant touch to your home and will also make you look extra considerate in the eyes of your in-laws.

Bring a religious element to your prayer room

When it comes to Indian homes, having a prayer room is indeed important. And speaking of in-laws visiting your home for the first time, this has to be a game-changer. So, don't think much and create a small prayer space. If you wish to bond with your in-laws, ask them for guidance. They will happily help you in setting up a perfect prayer room.

A guide on how to be the perfect gift-giver this festive season

Tired of sending out the same ol' mithai and dry fruits hamper to your social circle this Diwali? Confused over what to gift your loved ones? Fret not, we've got you covered. Hyderabadi socialites, who are known for sending out innovative gifts, give a guide on how to be the perfect gift-giver this festive season.

Are you one of those who gets stressed at the mere thought of picking out gifts for loved ones and acquaintances during the festive season? At this time of the year, stores are brimming with such glittering paraphernalia that you just don't know where to begin. Gifting earthen diyas might seem too simple and a candle seems too passé. The same ol' box of pre-packed mithai and dry fruits just don't seem to cut it anymore. Handwritten notes are preferred but confused about what to give with it? Fret not, we've got you covered. City socialites spill the beans on how to be the perfect gift-giver this Diwali.

Packaging matters no matter what gift you pick

First impression matters, even while picking a gift. The key lies in the packaging, say experts. "Gifts during the festive season need to be from the heart. You must put some thought into it and try to make it stand out. If you want to forgo the usual gift basket packaging, go for customised boxes instead," says entrepreneur Gulnar Virk Krishna.

She adds, "Even if you opt for a simple mithai and dry fruits hamper, pick a box that stands out. Pick a box that can be reused for storage of jewellery or other trinkets. Avoid food platters unless you know the dietary preferences of the person you're sending it to."

Going the extra mile for loved ones also makes them feel special, explains Gulnar. "Engraving the person's name lends a personal touch to the gifts. Even better, pick a box with an ethnic touch, like pearl embellishments. Diwali is all about those little touches that give a warm, cosy feeling of love and celebration. Pick something special that stays with them."

Go-to gift-basket:

- Fairy lights
- Gratitude jars
- Herbal teas
- Lanterns
- Wall-hangings

Even if you opt for a simple mithai and dry fruits hamper, pick a box that stands out and can be reused.

Shop local and make it personal

The most important thing while sending out gifts is finding that perfect balance between a gift that reflects you and how useful it can be to the person you're giving it to. Dancer Yamini Reddy, who's known for thoughtful gifts, says, "Handloom, locally-made artefacts can be a go-to during the festive season. If you're picking a saree, it can be Maheshwari, or pick a bandhani chunni instead. If the person you're gifting



to is not into ethnic wear, go for silver earrings instead. Instead of a regular candle, pick one that's customised with Andhra leather art or something equally unique. It's important to note that the gift should reflect the other person's personality as well as your own."

Giving perishables like sweets is a no-go. Yamini suggests opting for dry fruits instead. "Everyone will binge on sweets so no one needs the extra calories. Unless you're gifting your immediate family, I'd suggest avoiding dry fruits

as well," she says, adding, "But if you have to gift sweets, why not give them something they've never tasted? Send that belam kaju to Delhi and source something from elsewhere to gift friends here. Just don't be generic."

Go-to gift-basket:

- Etikoppaka bommalu
- Clay Cup sets
- Handmade House Décor
- Brassware
- Books

Choose handloom, locally-made artefacts. keep in mind that the gift should reflect the recipient's personality as well as your own. Don't be generic.

Fix your budget before shopping

Before you dive head-first into picking out those customised boxes and Bandhani chunnis, it's important to fix a budget, says fashion entrepreneur Kamini Saraf. "Fix a budget as to how much you want to splurge because it's easy to get carried away. The price doesn't matter as long as you pick something unique. Hit the local malls because those home décor stores have a lot to offer, so do websites online if you want to avoid the festive crowd. Jot down how much you want to spend on gifts for loved ones versus say an acquaintance before shopping," she says.

In COVID-19 times, it's better not to pick eatables for acquaintances or clients, reckons Kamini. "The ones close to you can always be sent something intimate and homemade a day before Diwali or even on the day. But for the rest, pick a store that offers packaged goods that can be sanitised before opening. Maybe even pick something that hasn't been touched by hands and packed in a bio-bubble," she explains, adding, "Avoid including masks and sanitisers in your gift hampers though. We've all had enough of those."

Go-to gift-basket:

- Scented candles
- Long-lasting flowers
- Indoor plants
- Incense
- Potpourri

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