



Tips for a Healthy Sesshin

Dear brothers and sisters attending the Sesshin this January,

As you may be aware there has been a tendency during the blustery month of January at Sesshin for some attendees to get sick with coughs and colds. I am writing to give some suggestions that may be implemented before you arrive to mitigate this problem. I will be available once again this year with homeopathic remedies and Vitamin D drops as well as Zinc lozenges in case you do get sick.

#1) Most important: Please start taking vitamin D as soon as possible. I recommend 5,000 I.U. daily when you are well each day of the winter season. If you do get sick I recommend 20,000 units a day for three days so bring it with you to the Sesshin.

'Research has confirmed that "catching" colds (and flu) may actually be a symptom of an underlying vitamin D deficiency. Less than optimal vitamin D levels will significantly impair your immune response and make you far more susceptible to contracting colds, influenza, and other respiratory infections.'

In the largest and most nationally representative study of its kind to date involving about 19,000 Americans, people with the lowest vitamin D levels reported having significantly more recent colds or cases of the flu -- and the risk was even greater for those with chronic respiratory disorders like asthma.³

#2) Avoid/reduce sugar!! This is a key factor in avoiding colds. Be careful at Sesshin with all the delicious cookies. Keep it to a minimum. (I know this is hard.) If you do get sick it is very, very important that you stop sugar the entire period of your illness.

#3) Try to reduce your stress levels by sleeping more and not pushing yourself too hard before you go on retreat. Stress predisposes you to getting a cold.

#4) Wash your hands before each dance if possible. If you are sick it is imperative that you wash your hands before each dance for a full minute with hot sudsy water and soap. It does not need to be anti-bacterial soap just soap. Best if you are sick not to dance or to wear gloves while dancing. I will bring some gloves.

#5) Take 15-30mg Zinc for two weeks before Session and bring it with you in case you do get sick.

Research also indicates zinc may have immune boosting properties, allowing your body to mount a stronger first response at the onset of cold symptoms.

There are usually around 200 distinct viruses circulating each year that make up "the common cold" and while it's not certain how the zinc curbs a cold, it appears to have antiviral properties that prevent the cold virus from replicating or attaching to your nasal membranes.

#6) Exercise regularly.

If you are exercising regularly the likelihood of your acquiring a cold or other viral illness is significantly reduced, and studies have clearly shown this. In one such study, staying active cut the risk of contracting a cold by 50 percent⁴, and cut the severity of symptoms by 31 percent among those who did catch a cold. The researchers noted that each round of exercise may lead to a boost in circulating immune system cells that could help ward off a virus.

Research information is from Dr. Mercola.

We will all try our very best to have a healthy, joyous Sesshin this year. Thank you.

Blessings to you all and see you soon!

Love,

Subhaana Herrick P.A., DH (hon)