

RUCHI GURNANI · NUTRITIONIST

7 days to fewer colds



No sachets, no chyawanprash. Seven habits with a trial behind each one, and the two things to do the moment a cold starts.

Swipe 👉

RUCHI GURNANI

Read this first

Adults get two or three colds a year. That is normal and no plate stops it. One every month is a pattern, and the pattern is almost never "weak immunity". It is short sleep, dry throats, and the habits around them.

Days 1 to 5 stop colds arriving. Days 6 and 7 are for the cold that arrives anyway.

THE ONE RULE

Seven hours of sleep. In a trial where people were given the cold virus on purpose, the ones sleeping under six hours caught it four times as often. Nothing on the next pages beats this.

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1

THE SLEEP DAY

- TONIGHT** Phone charging in another room. Bed by the time that gives seven hours before the alarm.
- CHAI** Last chai or coffee by 4 pm. Caffeine sits in the body six hours.
- DINNER** Three hours before bed. A heavy late dinner cuts sleep short.
- WEEKEND** Same wake time, even on Sunday. Catch-up sleep does not undo a short week.

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THE GARGLE DAY

- WHAT** Plain tap water, room temperature. Nothing added. In a Japanese trial through one winter, people who gargled water three times a day caught a third fewer colds. Betadine gargle did not.
- WHEN** After brushing in the morning, when you reach home, before bed. Fifteen seconds each.
- KIDS** From age 4 or 5, once they can spit it out.
- AC OFFICE** Dry AC air dries the throat, and a dry throat lets viruses in. Water every hour, a sip, not a bottle.

WHY IT WORKS

Viruses sit in the throat for hours before they get in. Gargling washes them out.

3

THE HANDS DAY

REACH HOME

Wash hands before anything else. Cold viruses live on hands and door handles for a day.

OFFICE

Before lunch, after the lift, after the shared keyboard. Soap, twenty seconds.

FACE

Most colds enter through the eyes and nose, from your own fingers. Notice how often you touch your face at the desk.

PHONE

Wipe it once a day. It goes from the table to your cheek.

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THE PLATE DAY

PROTEIN One palm-size portion at every meal: dal, paneer, eggs, chicken, sprouts. Antibodies are made of protein.

COLOUR Two fruits and two sabzis a day. Different colours, not a supplement.

SUN Twenty minutes of morning sun on arms and face. Vitamin D from sun costs nothing, and the trials show a daily source protects while a monthly sachet does not.

SUGAR Cold drinks and mithai every day crowd out the food above. Keep them to weekends this month.

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THE MOVE DAY

- WALK** Thirty minutes a day, brisk. People who walk regularly report fewer sick days than people who do not.
- NOT** Do not start a hard new gym plan in the same week as a cold. Very heavy training briefly lowers defences.
- STRESS** A ten-minute walk after lunch also drops the stress that keeps you awake. See Day 1.

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THE COLD HAS STARTED

FIRST SNEEZE

A zinc lozenge from the chemist, dissolved slowly in the mouth, every few hours while awake. Started on day one, colds run about a third shorter. Started on day three, no effect.

COUGH

One spoon of honey at bedtime. In trials it eased night cough better than cough syrup. Never for a child under one year.

BLOCKED

Ten minutes over a bowl of hot water, towel over the head, before bed. Plain water.

THROAT

Warm water, nimbu, honey. Sip through the day.

7

WHAT NOT TO DO

- ANTIBIOTICS** A cold is a virus. Antibiotics do nothing to it, and each unneeded course makes the next real infection harder to treat. Do not buy a strip over the counter.
- VITAMIN C** Sachets and tablets do not stop colds in normal life. The trials are clear. They may shave a few hours off one. Eat the fruit instead.
- WORK** Go in with a cold and you hand it to six people. Two days at home.
- SEE A DOCTOR** Fever over 3 days, chest pain, breathless, or a cold going into week three. That is not a cold.

FOR LIFE

Seven hours. Gargle water. Wash hands when you reach home. Three habits, no cost.

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