



# HEALTH AWARENESS

## Medicine Cabinet Makeover: Get Ready To Shoo The Flu

(NAPSA)—When the coughing, sneezing, headache and runny nose start coming on and you know you've caught a bug, you won't want to make a trip to the store to stock up on feel-better essentials. Save yourself a trip when you're at your worst by giving your medicine cabinet a "flu redo" now.

Since you never know when the flu bug will strike, it is important to have your medicine cabinet fully stocked before the flu season is in full swing and you or a family member becomes ill.

Before you catch the flu, follow these tips to make over your medicine cabinet for a more comfortable recovery at home:

**Check the Date:** Check the expiration dates and throw away any expired medications. Medicines that have passed their expiration date can lose effectiveness. Make a list of all the medicines you've tossed and restock your cabinet with new items.

**Soothe the Side Effects:** Lips may become drier than usual because of congestion, and some medications such as antihistamines can dry out your skin and lips.

"Severely chapped and cracked lips can make you more susceptible to infections," says Dr. Charles Zugerman, associate professor of clinical dermatology at Northwestern University Medical School. "To prevent this, make sure that your medicine cabinet is stocked with a lip balm that contains an external analgesic, such as Blistex Medicated Lip Ointment, which will provide medication directly to the lips and soothe damaged lip tissue." Even if lips aren't severely chapped, this lip balm penetrates the lips with



**Giving your medicine cabinet a flu redo now can save you a trip to the store when you're sneezing and coughing.**

moisture and should be kept on hand to provide comfort to dry lips.

**Just Because You Feel Sick Doesn't Mean You Have to Look It:** Even the softest tissues can cause redness and chafing of the nose and cheeks, so invest in a heavy facial moisturizer to soothe and prevent scaly skin. To help with red, irritated eyes, keep an eye mask and eyedrops on hand.

**Stop the Spread:** Stock up on soap, disinfectant wipes and a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent ethanol or isopropanol and ensure they're used frequently. Keep tissues fully stocked in your home and remember to use them only once, then immediately throw them away.

While you're at the store getting all you need for your medicine cabinet makeover, pick up a few things that may help prevent you from getting sick in the first place: Always keep a travel-sized hand sanitizer and tissues in your purse, bag or pocket. Also, don't forget lip balm during the cold, dry-weather season; it won't let your lips down.