



Ask Your Pharmacist

Curing Common Cold And Flu Myths

(NAPSA)—When the sniffles and aches invade your home this year, it might be time to reconsider your approach. Millions of Americans get a cold or the flu each year and, for many, acting on common misconceptions about treatments may actually prevent them from getting better faster.

“The best approach to treating symptoms is to talk to your pharmacist or doctor,” said Lindsey Stephens, pharmacist and director for Medicine Shoppe International, Inc. “There are countless old wives’ tales about colds and the flu but your pharmacist can help identify remedies for your individual symptoms.”

So what’s true and what’s myth? Medicine Shoppe Pharmacists have identified three popular cold and flu misconceptions as well as tips for avoiding a cold or the flu.

Myth 1: Getting a flu vaccine can give you the flu.

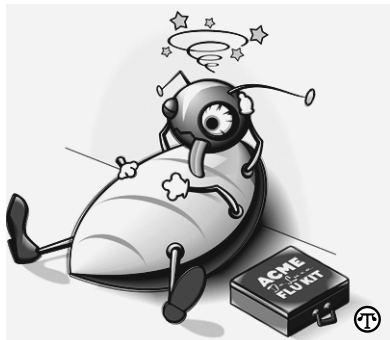
Flu vaccines are not live viruses and cannot give you the flu. But some people may have reactions to the shot or inhalation, including achy muscles, fever and drowsiness.

Myth 2: Antibiotics can cure the flu.

Most flus are viral illnesses, not bacterial, so antibiotics are not usually the best treatment option. Instead, treat the flu with rest, fluids and medications such as pain relievers and decongestants that relieve symptoms.

Myth 3: The more vitamins you can take, the better.

Taking a multivitamin helps strengthen your immune system but excess vitamins are eliminated by the body. For some people,



unpleasant symptoms such as stomach discomfort may occur due to unabsorbed vitamins in the intestinal tract. Talk to your pharmacist to find the right balance for your health.

There are proactive measures to protect your family from viruses this season. Pharmacists suggest:

- **Getting a flu shot**—Even if you had one last year, get it again. Flu viruses change each year and immunity declines over time.

- **Taking a daily multivitamin**—Strengthen your immune system with the recommended amount of vitamins and minerals.

- **Considering a zinc regimen**—If you feel a cold coming on, try a zinc supplement, which is intended to shorten the duration of a cold.

- **Talking to your pharmacist**—If you do get sick, your pharmacist can help you choose the best medicine to treat your symptoms. If your symptoms persist for longer than a week, check with your doctor.

For more information on medications or to find the nearest Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy and upcoming flu vaccine clinics, visit medicineshoppe.com.