

## - Alternative medicine

**Take cold comfort in home remedies****KATIE WRIGHT FINDS WAYS TO STOP THE SYMPTOMS GETTING WORSE**

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SOMETIMES it's a scratchy throat, maybe you've started sneezing, or perhaps your muscles are aching.



We all know the telltale signs that – whatever time of year it might be – a cold is on the way. But is there actually anything you can do to stop a cold in its tracks? Or is it best to admit defeat and wait for the inevitable to happen?

We asked a doctor for their advice on what you should and shouldn't do when you feel a cold coming on... What is a cold?

“The common cold is an infection in the upper respiratory tract, caused by a virus,” explains Dr Bryony Henderson, lead GP at the digital health provider Livi (livi.co.uk).

“It causes characteristic sneezing and a runny nose and, although it's not usually clinically serious, it can be very annoying and uncomfortable.”

Symptoms can include a runny or blocked nose, sneezing, headaches, a sore throat, a temperature, a cough and muscle aches.

Most adults catch a cold around two or three times a year, but, as any parent knows, children usually have more.

“Although more common in winter, a cold can occur at any time of year,” says Dr Henderson.

How can you stop a cold getting worse?

When you start to feel symptoms coming on, there are a few things you can do at home to prevent the cold from worsening.

Dr Henderson says: “Things like getting plenty of rest and sleep, keeping warm, drinking lots of fluids – preferably water over any sugary drinks – and eating nutritious foods that are high in protein can all help.

“Honey and lemon mixed in warm water can help a cough, although this should not be given to children under 12 months.”

To soothe a sore throat she suggests gargling with salt water (for adults only), while to alleviate a blocked nose or sinus, you could try inhaling steam from a hot shower or a bowl of boiling water with a towel covering your head.

“The heat from the steam helps

break down mucus build up in the nose or sinuses, making it easier to clear them out by gently blowing your nose,” she explains.

What medicine is best for a cold?

Some over-the-counter medications can be useful as a first line of defence. Dr Henderson says: "Taking paracetamol or ibuprofen, for example, is effective to reduce any pain or a high temperature."

If you're feeling bunged up or have a sore throat, she advises: "Decongestant sprays or tablets can also be

effective in treating blocked noses or sinuses. Sore throat lozenges won't treat your cold, but they may provide some relief, so keep some of these handy if you start to feel a scratchy throat coming on."

And when it comes to medication it's important to remember: "The common cold is a virus so antibiotics will not work – they only treat a bacterial infection."

Should you see a doctor?

In most cases, there's no need to see a doctor about a common cold – unless your symptoms are unusually severe.

"It's important to consult with a doctor if you still have symptoms that have not improved after three weeks, or if you feel very unwell," says Dr Henderson.

"Particularly if you have a very high temperature, or your symptoms have suddenly gotten worse. If you develop chest pain, wheezing or shortness of breath, it's important to see your GP."

Ashbourne, Derbyshire WHERE AND WHY

Just a short walk from the centre of historic Ashbourne, Callow Hall is a perfect location for a romantic stay, or a great base for walkers or cyclists.

The building dates back to Victorian times was recently bought by entrepreneur Ed Burrows, who spent millions to bring it up to top standards.

The 15 bedrooms have been created by interior designer Isabella Worsley's London studio and have stunning furnishings.

We were spoiled in a fabulous room with emperor-size bed and free-standing bath overlooking the stunning Derbyshire countryside. There is also woodland accommodation in the shape of 11 bedroom Hives complete with bathroom, kitchenette and outdoor bathing.

ON THE MENU

The Garden Room restaurant, above, has lovely views over the Peak District. Before our meal we enjoyed a cocktail and all the food was made from the fresh local produce.

I opted for an 8oz fillet steak which arrived with chips, vine tomatoes, portobello mushrooms and rocket while my partner enjoyed a pork chop with Bramley apple compote.

She said the Callow Hall Herb Garden dessert was the best she had ever tasted. Starters are from £10, mains from £20 and desserts from £3.50.

WHILE YOU'RE THERE

Bikes are available to hire on site to venture out to the nearby Tissington Trail. For people who want to stay closer to home there are lovely walks around the estate's 35-acre woodland.

The Coach Room also has a sauna and treatment rooms.

WAKE-UP CALL

Rooms at Callow Hall start at £239 a night. [wildhive.uk](http://wildhive.uk)

By Andy Richardson