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**A HEALTH TIP FOR PERSONAL CARE DURING THE H1N1 PANDEMIC**

Although you have probably been inundated with flu information I have gathered, I now present some known and little known facts and practices that may help prevent an influenza infection. Please read and consider each of the seven points listed below.

Influenza virus can be present and proliferating in your sinus and/or throat while you are still healthy and not showing any symptoms of infection. In order to prevent proliferation, aggravation of symptoms and development of secondary infections (full blown flu), some very simple steps that are rarely ever mentioned in most official communications should be practiced.

Considering that there are only two possible routes of viral entry into a person (nose and mouth), consider:

1. Frequent hand-washing. Wash often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing or sneezing and before eating. Most people are aware that using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer will kill 99.9% of germs but the manufacturers will not advertise that it in fact does not kill influenza virus!
2. "Hands-off-the-face" approach. Resist all temptations to touch any part of your face. If you smoke, never let your fingers touch your lips.
3. Gargle twice a day with warm salt water (use Listerine if you don't trust salt). H1N1 takes 2-3 days after initial infection in the throat/nasal cavity to proliferate and show characteristic symptoms. Simple gargling prevents proliferation. In a way, gargling with salt water has the same effect on a healthy individual that Tamiflu has on an infected one. Don't underestimate this simple, inexpensive and powerful preventative method.
4. Similar to 3 above, clean your nostrils at least once every day with warm salt water. Not everybody may be good at Jala Neti Potting, but blowing the nose at least once a day and swabbing both nostrils with cotton buds dipped in warm salt water is very effective in bringing down a viral population.

(It is my opinion that everyone should use a Neti Pot/sinus cleanse on a daily basis. I typically Neti Pot every morning and every evening before bed and the results are incredible. Using the Neti may seem strange at first but it is very easy to use, comfortable, economical, soothing and it also effectively removes pollen, mold and head congestion (you won't believe the "junk" that is blown / flushed out). Neti potting in the winter when the air is very dry helps keep the sinus linings moist and healthy. For more information go to [www.jalanetipot.com](http://www.jalanetipot.com).)

5. Boost your natural immunity with foods that are rich in Vitamin C. If you have to supplement with Vitamin C tablets make sure that it also has Zinc to boost absorption. Vitamin D has also been shown to reduce the severity of influenza..

6. Drink plenty of warm liquids such as tea, coffee, etc. Drinking warm liquids has the same effect as gargling, but in the reverse direction. The warm liquid will wash off proliferating viruses from the throat into the stomach where they cannot survive or do any harm.

7. If you have symptoms of a flu-like illness (Fever, Cough, Body Aches, Sore Throat, Headache, Chills, Runny or Stuffy Nose AND fatigue) stay home and away from work and other social settings for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone without the use of a fever reducing medications.

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