

Fighting Cold and Flu This Holiday Season

There is often a misconstrued conception that common cold and flu (influenza) is an infection of temperate climates, and tropics country like Malaysia is at a low risk, at best. Cold and flu is predominantly seen year-round in Malaysia, with no seasonal trend. However, the infection commonly recorded a spike between October and May, coincide with the Malaysian monsoon season and year-end cross continental holiday season at its peak. While cold and flu viruses are not air-borne, close proximity with infected persons will increase the chance of infections. Viruses in tiny droplets released from sneezing and coughing may stay active for long hours on surfaces like table, wash basin and door knobs.

Cold vs. Flu Symptoms

Cold symptoms normally developed over few days while flu symptoms normally have a sudden on-set without prior indications. While some of the symptoms may be similar, flu will have a higher degree of severity as compared to cold.

SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Stuff / Blocked / Runny Nose	✓	✓
Sore Throat	✓	✓
Cough	✓	✓
Red Watery Eyes	✓	✓
Sneezing	✓	✓
Coughing	✓	✓
Fever	✓	✓
Headache	✓	✓
Tiredness	✓	✓
Sweating / Shivering		✓
Aching muscles / joints		✓
Weakness / Lethargy		✓
Loss of appetite		✓
Nausea / Vomiting		✓

Natural Treatment for Cold and Flu

The treatment of common cold and flu are directed at symptomatic relief. With concerns pertaining to antibiotic resistance and unsatisfactory response from conventional drugs, the demands for effective complementary and alternative medicines (CAM) products for cold and flu has become very common, and they are well-accepted and widely used in Germany and other European countries. Natural phytoactive ingredients of Ivy leaf and Pelargonium root have been studied extensively in the treatment of upper and lower respiratory tract infections with positive results.



Ivy Leaf Extract

Grown in Europe, Northern and Central Asia, Ivy (*Hedera helix*) leaves and berries are beneficial for the treatment of respiratory tract diseases. Ivy leaf is the most popular herbal medicines used in Germany and many other European countries. Ivy leaf is used for the treatment of cough, particularly when associated with a lot of viscous mucus, as well as adjuvant treatment of inflammatory bronchial conditions (eg. bronchitis and asthma). It is also known to have antibacterial, antifungal, antimycotic and antiviral actions.

Pelargonium Root Extract

Commonly known as African Geranium, Pelargonium (*Pelargonium sidoides*) medicinal roots has been used by the Zulu tribe for centuries to treat cough, cold, upper respiratory tract irritation and tuberculosis. It was first marketed in Britain around 1897 by Charles H. Stevens after his successful treatment in tuberculosis. Studies showed that the roots have 3-fold activity profile include antibacterial, antiviral and immune-modulatory activities. This may help to protect our body against infections by inhibiting the activity of harmful bacteria and virus and increase our body's immune response. It also supports a mucolytic effect during cold and flu.

Combination is Better

When you have cold and flu, you will experience multiple symptoms, thus combination of active ingredients tends to have better treatment results than single ingredient. Unlike conventional drugs which only relieve the symptoms of cold and flu, natural phytoactive ingredients have wider therapeutic effects. The combination of Ivy leaf and Pelargonium root is a safe alternative for both adults and children and provide the following cold and flu relief:

- Shortens duration of cold
- Reduces severity of sore throat, nasal congestion and cough
- Relieves symptoms of acute bronchitis
- Loosen thick phlegm
- Breaks up and dissolve mucus
- Relieves irritating cough
- Eases breathing

It is worth to know that Ivy leaf and Pelargonium root work best when taken within 48 hours of the initial symptoms and is the herbal medicines that will keep the cold and flu infections at bay in the coming holiday season.

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