

*Welcome to
Brooksville
Healthcare's Dietary
Department*



Pumpkin Soup

Ingredients

- 6 cups chicken stock
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 4 cups pumpkin puree
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1 cup chopped onion

- 1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
- 5 whole black peppercorns



Directions

1. Heat stock, salt, pumpkin, onion, thyme, garlic, and peppercorns. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, and simmer for 30 minutes uncovered.
2. Puree the soup in small batches (1 cup at a time) using a food processor or blender.
3. Return to pan, and bring to a boil again. Reduce heat to low, and simmer for another 30 minutes, uncovered. Stir in heavy cream. Pour into soup bowls and garnish with fresh parsley.

14 Ways to Avoid Colds and Flu

Feeling under the weather? Getting more sleep can help.

Are you avoiding your co-worker with that hacking cough, cold, or flu in the cubicle next to you? Do you draw your hand back from every doorknob? Have cold-and-flu phobia? Get a grip before the gripe gets you. We've consulted dozens of medical experts to bring you 14 ways to avoid colds and flu this season.

Every time you shake someone's hand, wash yours

But don't stop there. Wash them as much as possible, says Mark Mengel, MD, chair of community and family medicine at Saint Louis University School of Medicine. Running lots of water over your hands will dilute any germs and send them down the drain.

Keep your hands off

Touching your nose and your eyes may hurt you, Mengel says. Those are the most common places for germs to get in.

Go to bed

As if getting enough sleep on a normal basis isn't hard enough, you need more z's when you're feeling under the weather. When you're tired, your body isn't fighting as hard, so Mengel suggests getting 8 to 10 hours a night.

Get your shot

Last year's flu-shot shortages are, well, last year's shortages, says Jeff Robertson, MD, and chief medical officer for health insurer Regence. Finding flu shots should be easier this year, but you should get one early.

Build up with healthy food

You may think it's hard to eat healthily on a regular basis, but eating plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables supports your immune system, Robertson says. And that's a lot easier than fighting off the flu.

Work out

Get those sweats on and exercise, says Ann G. Kulze, MD, CEO and founder of Dr. Ann and Just Wellness. Working out regularly enhances immune function, she explains.

Stay away

Keep your distance from people displaying symptoms like sneezing and coughing. While that strategy may seem obvious, it applies to more than just strangers and colleagues. Stay away from sick friends and family when possible, Robertson says.

Sanitize yourself

Keep sanitizing gel or alcohol-based hand wipes on you at all times. But read the label before you buy, says Robertson: Some wipes are not alcohol-based and won't be as effective.

Another reason to quit

Smoking increases the risk of infections by making structural changes in the respiratory tract and decreasing immune response, according to a study of smokers and infection published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* in 2004. In particular, Mengel says, smoking destroys cilia, the little hairlike fibers inside our noses; this can help increase infection risks.

Did you just double dip that chip?

Beware of the dip. It may be harboring more than savory salsa. Double-dippers may be passing germs to those who eat after them, Mengel says.

Another reason to shop

Our purses pick up germs like we do, according to Joseph Brasco, MD, author of *The Great Physician's Rx for Colds and Flu*, so you could be re-infecting yourself every time you pick up your handbag. His suggestion: Put away your cloth purse during the winter months and carry one made of easier-to-wipe-down vinyl or leather. Of course, you could always just buy more purses.

I hear your mother calling

Biting your nails may be hurting you, Brasco says. Germs get under your nails and nibbling is a fast way to ingest them.

Try to smile

New research has found that happiness may help you. Carl Charnetski, MD, professor of psychology at Wilkes University, found that sex, positive thinking, playing with a pet, and other pleasurable behaviors will boost your immune system.

You want me to sneeze where?

It may sound strange, but when you have to cough and sneeze, do so into the crook of your elbow, not into your hands. Since your hands are a common source of germs, doing that will prevent them from spreading, Kulze says.

Already sick?

Here are four things you can do to get better, according to Jeff Robertson, MD, and chief medical officer for health insurer Regence.

Take some alone time

This is the when you'll want to shy away from company. Stay home and take care of yourself.

Watch your symptoms

If it goes from simple sniffles to raging sickness, contact your doctor. Your cold may have escalated to the flu.

Drink, drink, drink

Dehydration can easily occur (especially if you are running a fever or vomiting). If you're unable to keep fluids down, contact your physician.

Now's not the time to save up

Dispose of all used tissues. As easy as it is to grab whatever is on the nightstand (including crumpled Kleenex), don't! You may be furthering the cold.