**GETTING WELL & STAYING WELL**

**Patrice Michaels**

*Here are some basics that should help you think about what can help you get well when you suffer normal colds/flu or virus, and what can help keep you well.*

*These are my personal regimens. I am not a doctor, nor am I dispensing medical advice.*

 **THE TOOL KIT**

**-Warm Hat -Salt for gargling**

**-Warm Socks -Water-soluble gel for nasal passages**

**-Scarf -Manuka honey lozenges**

**-Thermometer -Zinc lozenges**

**-Room Humidifier/cleaning supplies -Fisherman’s Friend lozenges**

**-Hygrometer -Slippery Elm lozenges**

**FEELING OFF**

*You need to know your actual typical temperatures morning/noon/night in order to make best use of a thermometer as an early warning system. Chart your temp at the same times for 5 days and use the averages as your guideline.*

*If you think a cold might be coming on, begin warm salt-water gargles and zinc lozenges\* immediately.*

**ACTUALLY SICK**

*Calculate when you were likely to have begun your contagious phase, as well as when you are likely to stop being contagious. Be considerate and stay home until you’re confident you’re not contagious. Wear a mask if you’re not sure, and need to go out.*

*Continue salt-water gargles every 2-4 hrs while awake until throat symptoms abate.*

*If your mucous is thickening and turning dark yellow or green, see a doctor.*

*If you’re having difficulty breathing, see a doctor.*

*If you’re having debilitating headache, nausea, or other severe symptoms, see a doctor.*

*Light diet with non-caffeinated, sugarless liquids dominant, frequent and voluminous.*

*Keep room humidity on the higher side.*

*\*Use zinc lozenges according to daily limit guidelines – this is strong medicine.*

*Never use Zicam nasal products: they can cause permanent loss of olfactory sense.*

*Use Fisherman’s Friend to control cough.*

*Use Slippery Elm lozenges to sooth mucosal lining of throat.*

*Use manuka honey lozenges at will: this type of honey has high natural antibiotic properties, in addition to the soothing and restorative qualities of honey in general.*

**RECOVERED ENOUGH TO SING**

**Continue salt-water gargles morning and evening.**

**Avoid coughing as much as possible (continue lozenges as needed).**

**Test singing for short periods (5min max) at frequent intervals (hourly) for the first day. If there are sections of the voice that resist phonation after several short periods, wait til the following day to try again.**

**If phonation is secure and energy is reasonable, congestion should not be a deterrent to singing.**

**SLEEP**

Regular sleep habits are most conducive to good physical and emotional health.
Stopping for a short nap or lie-down can be helpful when sleep habits are disrupted.

<https://www.drweil.com/health-wellness/body-mind-spirit/sleep-issues/>

**HYDRATION**

If you are hydrating regularly, you will not need to drink water constantly during lessons or rehearsals.

Use water-soluble nasal gel, especially when the weather approaches freezing or below, to support hydration and protection of the airway and throat.

If you suffer from dry mouth, especially when preparing to coach or perform, you can chew very thin slices of apple at regular intervals the hour before you perform or coach. If you have acid reflux, you might prefer to chew gum instead.

[**https://slate.com/human-interest/2019/09/podcasting-apples-guide.html**](https://slate.com/human-interest/2019/09/podcasting-apples-guide.html)

[**https://www.drweil.com/health-wellness/balanced-living/healthy-home/water-the-essential-nutrient/**](https://www.drweil.com/health-wellness/balanced-living/healthy-home/water-the-essential-nutrient/)

**EXERCISE**

Your unique body and circumstances will lead you to the best exercise regimen for you. Singing has an athletic component, but by itself is not enough to keep your body conditioned.

[**https://www.drweil.com/blog/spontaneous-happiness/the-importance-of-exercise-for-emotional-health/**](https://www.drweil.com/blog/spontaneous-happiness/the-importance-of-exercise-for-emotional-health/)

**FOOD**

Your unique body, taste preferences and daily schedule will strongly affect your ability to nourish yourself well. Like sleep, regular mealtimes and high-quality snacks will support your overall wellbeing.

**AIR QUALITY**

**What are safe levels of CO and CO2 in rooms?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 250-400ppm | Normal background concentration in outdoor ambient air |
| 400-1,000ppm | Concentrations typical of occupied indoor spaces with good air exchange |
| 1,000-2,000ppm | Complaints of drowsiness and poor air. |
| 2,000-5,000 ppm | Headaches, sleepiness and stagnant, stale, stuffy air. Poor concentration, loss of attention, increased heart rate and slight nausea may also be present. |
| 5,000 | Workplace exposure limit (as 8-hour TWA) in most jurisdictions. |
| >40,000 ppm | Exposure may lead to serious oxygen deprivation resulting in permanent brain damage, coma, even death. |

**HUMIDITY**

You can control the environment in which you breathe the most – your sleeping area – to optimize your health. You will need an appropriately-sized humidifier, a hygrometer and cleaning supplies for the humidifier. In some cases, you may need a dehumidifier.

[**https://www.sensitivechoice.com/indoor-humidity/**](https://www.sensitivechoice.com/indoor-humidity/)

**SINGING WITH AMBIENT NOISE, OUTDOORS, AND IN VARIOUSLY REVERBERANT ACOUSTICS**

The experience of singing is unavoidably linked to the environment in which you sing. Your awareness of the factors affecting the way your sound moves through space is a key factor in your ability to stay focused on the kinesthetic experience of sound creation, to use your auditory system as a ***secondary*** source of confirmation, and to overcome challenges presented by the environment.

[**https://nautil.us/issue/38/noise/how-noise-makes-music**](https://nautil.us/issue/38/noise/how-noise-makes-music)

**In the case of a common cold or flu: you have tools available (sleep, hydration, simple diet) to assist yourself in healing. Return to community life 24 hrs after you are fever-free.**

***Keep current on the CDC information and guidelines for highly communicable viruses:***

***If you have been exposed to COVID, RSV or other highly communicable viruses, you will not test positive immediately. Use testing methods as available to assist in decision making, even if you don’t feel ill.***

***If you test positive for COVID, RSV or other highly communicable viruses, remove yourself from community life, inform your instructors and colleagues as either required, or as you determine to be appropriate, if there is no explicit requirement****.*

**If you feel unwell in any way and would benefit from professional medical advice, seek that professional care right away**