

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

HEALTH PROMOTION

Newsletter - Winter 2006 / 2007



Avoiding Colds and Flu



Colds and flu occur throughout the year, but do appear to be more common in the Winter months. They are caused by viruses which are easily spread.

If someone has a cold or flu and they sneeze, cough or speak, tiny droplets of fluid containing the cold or flu virus are launched into the air. If these are breathed in by someone else then they may become infected. They may also be spread by touching a surface where the virus has settled, then transferring the virus to our eyes, nose or mouth.

The main symptoms of a cold are sneezing, a sore throat and a blocked or runny nose. This may be accompanied by a high temperature, tiredness and/or headaches. The flu is more severe than a cold and symptoms develop more quickly and usually include a fever, severe aches and pains, and exhaustion.

There are some steps you can take to minimise your chances of catching colds and flu:

- Keep fit and healthy - eat well, exercise, and get plenty of rest
- Wash your hands often and thoroughly
- Avoid touching your hands, nose or mouth
- Use disposable tissues and dispose of them
- Wear gloves when out and about to avoid contact with germs, especially on public transport, handrails, escalators, etc.

Additional advice on colds and flu and how to avoid them is available <http://www.safety.ed.ac.uk/health>

Self Defence Classes

Are you interested in learning about self defence?

The School of Biomedical Sciences has recently organised self defence classes for staff at Little France, and a second class is being run in the central area in January. Anyone interested in attending this class, or indeed in organising self defence classes for staff in their own building / School, etc., should contact Janet Philp by email at J.A.C.Philp@ed.ac.uk or by telephone on 651 1495 for further details. Please note that a nominal charge applies for attending this class.

For A Festive Healthy Option Try: - Cranberry Smoothie

- 225g/8oz cranberry juice, chilled
- 6 medium strawberries, hulls removed and cut into halves
- ½ banana, cut into quarters
- ½ cup crushed ice



Method: Put all ingredients in a Blender. Blend for a few seconds on high speed, or until ingredients are thoroughly combined. Pour into a large glass. Enjoy! (Recipe by the Cranberry Society)

Who's watching your drink?

Drink spiking, when alcohol or a drug is added to your drink without your knowledge is something to be aware of. Common reasons for spiking drinks include amusement, sexual assault and robbery and it's not only women who are affected, as 11% of victims are male. When you're out enjoying a drink remember the following:

- Don't leave drinks unattended.
- Ask a friend to watch over your drink when you go to the toilet, or take it with you.
- Don't accept drinks from someone you don't know.
- If your drink looks topped up or tastes different – don't risk it, get another one.
- Drink spiking isn't restricted to pubs and clubs it can happen anywhere, even in someone's home.

If you suspect your drink's been spiked, don't taste it, ask the pub or club management, or someone you trust, to put your drink to one side as you may report the incident to the police.

Ask someone you know and trust to help you home, or call a licensed taxi. If you feel unwell go to hospital as a precaution. The police advise that suspected spiking incidents should be reported to them as soon as possible.



Please stay safe and enjoy!

Emergency Assistance

The emergency telephone number within University buildings is 2222. This is a dedicated emergency number which will connect you to University Security Services.



From an outside line, University Security Services can be contacted on 0131 650 2257. ***It may be useful to programme this telephone number into your mobile phone in case of emergency whilst on University business.***

The Security team can attend a situation, summon the emergency services when appropriate, and can help direct emergency vehicles to the required location.

Security Services based at Appleton Tower provide a 24 hour service, 365 days-a-year to staff and students.

For advice on personal safety and security issues and for information about the services available from Security Services see <http://www.security.ed.ac.uk/>

Seasonal Stress

We realise whilst this is a happy time for most, some of our staff may find this time of year difficult for many reasons, please remember you can have support from our in-house counselling service. Counselling offers the opportunity to explore concerns and make sense of feelings and behaviours. Alongside the benefit of being heard, increasing insight can relieve distress and lead to more effective ways of handling life. It can often be helpful to seek counselling when something is relatively minor rather than waiting until you feel at breaking point. All contact with the Staff Counsellor is completely confidential.

Issues that staff bring to Counselling include; Managing change and transitions, relationship difficulties, depression, harassment and bullying, anxiety, bereavement or loss, personal problems at home or work, stress which is interfering with the ability to function effectively at work or home, alcohol or drug use.

Contact the service either by email:
StaffCounsellor@ed.ac.uk or



Phone 650 2513 – A confidential answer phone. Leave a message and best contact number and your call will be returned as quickly as possible.

Walk Yourself Fit

'Paths to Health' was established in 2001 to promote walking as a means of improving health.

Walking is free, accessible to all regardless of age, income or ability, can be incorporated into our daily lives, can be done on your own or as part of a social activity and has a low risk of injury.



The University is interested in setting up 'Paths to Health' walking groups. To start off we're looking for staff who might be interested in training as Walk Leaders to walk with others at lunchtimes.

Training involves attending a half-day course where you'll find out about the role of the Walk Leader, benefits, barriers to activity and motivating others. If you're interested in becoming a Leader, please contact Karen.Darling@ed.ac.uk

For more information on Paths to Health see <http://www.safety.ed.ac.uk/health/pathstohealth.shtm>

Walk to Win Challenge

The Walk to Win Challenge was a great success with 400 individuals sent a Challenge pack. Due to the high level of demand a small number of people unfortunately didn't receive a pack. Don't worry there are plans in the pipeline to run a similar event.



The Challenge encouraged staff to incorporate walking into their day and prizes were given to the individuals and teams that made the most progress over the fortnight.

Are you managing to walk the recommended 10,000 steps a day? For tips and advice on walking, please contact Fiona Simon at Fiona.Simon@ed.ac.uk or visit www.transport.ed.ac.uk/walking

Anyone without access to the www can obtain details on the above from the Health & Safety Department.

Please contact Karen Darling (51 4258), Janet Craig (51 4302), or one of the Health Promotion Group.

Health and Safety Department,
Charles Stewart House
9-16 Chambers St.
☎ 0131 651 4258
Health.Safety@ed.ac.uk
www.safety.ed.ac.uk/health