Flu on You? Here's what to do.

If you have watched the news lately you can't help but see the media frenzy about the flu this year. I thought it would be helpful to enlighten you about what the flu actually is, and what you can do about it.

Influenza aka "the flu" is a virus that has several different strains or variations. The Center for Disease Control monitors the genetic blueprint of the most commonly occurring strains during the flu season, which runs from November through February. The purpose of monitoring the virus is to help predict what will become the dominant strain for next flu season so they can develop a vaccine against that particular strain.

A vaccine is generally an attenuated or weakened virus with agents such as mercury and other trace metals or metabolic poisons that keep the virus in a weakened state. Once injected, the immune system responds to the weakened virus by developing antibodies against the virus through an antigen-antibody reaction. The theory is that the vaccine stimulates antibody production that should offer you protection against the naturally occurring virus if you were to come in contact with it. In an ideal situation this sounds like a solid plan of action since the influenza virus has debilitating and potentially fatal complications for individuals with health conditions and weak immune systems.

So where is the dilemma?

First: the vaccine is developed against last year's strain and a prediction of what might be coming this year. This year's strain called Fujian is a derivative of the Panama strain of last year, but the Panama strain was not predicted to become dominant thus the vaccine was developed against a completely different strain and offers little protection against Fujian Flu. Ultimately the effectiveness of this year's vaccine will not be very good; perhaps 30% effective being optimistic.

Second : you undergo a 100% chance of receiving mercury and the other attenuating agents in the flu vaccine if you undergo the injection. Mercury is a powerful biotoxin, which accumulates in the body and is suspected to be involved in many disease states. Getting your flu shot every year means getting a dose of mercury in your body with it. Doing this every year adds up.

Third: the flu vaccine is recommended for people with compromised immune systems. This seems reasonable, but based on the fundamentals of immunology people with compromised immune systems may benefit even less than a person with a normal immune system since the immune system's antigen-antibody system is not as effective in immune compromised

individuals. Also, a small portions of people who receive the flu vaccine actually contract the virus and get sick. This may be due to the handling of the drug and the proper factors that keep the virus in its weakened state, or it may be that even a weakened virus could be too much for certain individuals with poor immune function. In spite of this the flu vaccine may be a good idea for especially susceptible individuals.

So the flu vaccine isn't a foolproof method of avoiding the flu. This begs the question "what can we do naturally to bolster our immune systems to prevent flu infection and what can we do if we do get the flu?"

The basics of flu prevention involve several fundamental components.

1. Get adequate rest, since sleep deprivation reduces immune function as much as 50% in some studies.
2. Eat a well balanced diet with emphasis on fruits and vegetables to promote healthy immune activity.
3. Reduce or eliminate sugar intake. Sugar suppresses the immune system.
4. Use vitamins and minerals to improve your resistance, such as vitamin A, vitamin C, and zinc.
5. Use supplements to stimulate immune activity like 1,3 beta glucan, medicinal mushroom extracts, garlic and a variety of other supplements.
6. Use fish oil and other essential fats to strengthen immune cells.
7. Get spinal adjustments as this has been shown to stimulate the immune system even in patients with immune deficiencies.

The basics of flu treatment are similar to preventing it.

1. Get plenty of rest, don't try to push through it.
2. Stay hydrated. Dehydration makes the symptoms worse and causes complications.
3. Reduce or eliminate sugar intake. Sugar suppresses the immune system.
4. Eat nutrient dense foods and broths. Fruit juices, especially homemade juices with carrots, celery, apples and other fruits and vegetables provide essential nutrients that you need to get better.
5. Supplement with Vitamin A and Zinc which are both depleted during flu. Take vitamin C and a good multiple formula.
6. Use a high quality protein supplement to boost antibody production. (One especially high in glutamine.) I recommend whey protein isolate.
7. Use medicinal herbs like Turmeric, Ginger, and Cats Claw to combat fever and the inflammatory response and Astragulus and Echinacea to stimulate immune activity.
8. Use fish oil and other essential oils to strengthen immune cells.
9. Use N-acetyl cysteine to thin mucous secretions and ease lung congestion.

If you feel as though you are especially sick or that the infection has settled in the lungs or you have become dehydrated, then you should contact your doctor.

Contact the office for additional questions and information.

Wishing you the best for this holiday (and flu) season.

Yours in health,

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