



TARGET TIPS

BUILDING A GOOD DEFENSE



With the change of seasons, you might find yourself letting down your guard when it comes to hand washing and other habits used to guard yourself against infection. It's important to remember that those wintertime coughs, colds, and other infectious bugs are still lurking. Being aware of where pathogens may be hiding, as well as keeping good personal habits, will help you steer clear of unnecessary infections.

METABOLISM MATTERS

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Don't forget that exercise and healthy eating are the best ways to keep your immune system strong. Home cooked meals within your caloric range and a good workout will definitely pay off!

Think about where your hands have been. It's easy to get complacent about infection risk, especially in familiar, seemingly harmless surroundings. Try to think about the things that hands - yours and other people's - frequently touch. For example, when was the last time you wiped down your steering wheel, computer keyboard, doorknobs, or light switches? These are great places for germs to hide. Try to clean them on a regular basis, if possible. Be thoughtful about where your hands have been, and take precautions accordingly.

Wash your hands frequently. This one seems obvious. We've all probably heard this advice countless times, but that doesn't mean it's not a good idea. On the contrary, this little bit of wisdom is so often repeated *because* it's a good idea! You can't always ensure that your hands are free of infectious agents, but you can at least take measures to keep any germs from catching a ride with your lunch. Be sure to wash all parts of your hands thoroughly, including areas you might sometimes neglect, such as the webbing at the base of your thumbs and around your fingernails.

Take time to be healthy. While you can wash your hands, keep your home and workplace inundated with antiseptic agents, and even take pains to steer clear of coworkers, friends, and anyone else who might be feeling under the weather, there's no substitute for basic self-care. Give yourself plenty of sleep. Keep a regular, reasonable bedtime whenever possible. Make the effort to maintain a healthy diet, drink plenty of water, and of course, exercise regularly. All of these will help to give your body the best possible defense against illness and infection.