

[sg_popup id="39" event="onload"][/sg_popup]You may be thinking that with all the coughing, sneezing, and sniffing right now, the *last* thing you want is somebody's arms around you. It's understandable, and wise, to be germ-conscious in wintry months, but a [Carnegie Mellon University study](#) wants to rid you of some concerns, and actually encourage interaction with our flu infested friends and family.

The study, published in *Psychological Science*, a journal of the Association for Psychological Science, reveals that constant hugging has the ability to reduce susceptibility to infections associated with stress, as well as the severity of symptoms if you caught a cold or flu while giving social or emotional support to another.

The study surveyed 404 healthy adults asking them how often they experienced interpersonal conflicts, followed by how often they received hugs. The researchers were able to develop levels of social support based on the participants data. With this base line of data established, the researchers exposed the participants to a common cold virus and observed them for symptoms.

"We know that people experiencing ongoing conflicts with others are less able to fight off cold viruses," Sheldon Cohen, lead author of the study, explained in a release. "We tested whether perceptions of social support are ... effective in protecting us from stress-induced susceptibility to infection."

The social support was able to reduce a participant's risk of becoming infection, along with helping those who were infected experience less severe symptoms.

Cohen continued by saying that the results, "suggest that being hugged by a trusted person may act as an effective means of conveying support and that increasing the frequency of

hugs might be an effective means of reducing the deleterious effects of stress.”

However, before you go out and start hugging all your friends and family infected with a cold or flu, the study was not able to clarify if the reduced risk of infection was a result of the actual act of hugging, or merely the intimacy and support that would be associated with hugging.

Either way, it's a sweet relief to learn that a simple embrace may aid in combating the common cold.

Here at Phenomenex, a few of us weren't lucky enough to avoid the season of stuffed up noses. So while it was abundant in the office, we decided to analyze a common cold medication in the lab. The current range of compounds aimed at the treatment of the common cold is quite large and comprise of ingredients from a variety of chemical characteristics. This is the direct result of a diverse array of pharmaceutical formulations that contain more than one active ingredient and target multiple symptoms at once.

With such a mixture of polar compounds, resolution, sensitivity, and speed are all important parameters. By using a high performance core-shell Kinetex 2.6 μm EVO C18 column we were able to achieve comprehensive resolution, narrow peak shapes, and a rapid analysis time. This ingredient screen can easily be used as a starting point for individual formulations as well as transferred between R&D and QC instrumentation due to the direct scalability of all three Kinetex EVO C18 particle sizes (1.7 μm , 2.6 μm , 5 μm).

Check out the full application here: [Cold Medication Analysis](#)

Tips from the experts

Be cautious with neti pots and antibiotics

"[T]here are two common mistakes that people make when treating themselves when they're using neti pots and taking antibiotics. If you have the flu, using a neti pot will hurt you rather than help you. [Dr. Woodson Merrell recommends] neti pots for colds only and favors steam inhalations for the flu or when you're not sure whether you have a cold or the flu. [A]ntibiotics will only be effective if you have a bacterial infection, as opposed to a virus." *Dr. Woodson Merrell, M.D., Executive Director of the Beth Israel Medical Center's Center for Health and Healing - Livestrong.com*

Sip hot tea and honey

"Drinking warm liquids helps to open up your stuffy nose and soothe a sore throat. Hot tea with a dollop of honey can help quiet a cough. But don't give honey to children under a year old. It can make them very sick." *Dr. Jean Carstensen, M.D., University of Michigan-Ann Arbor - WebMD.com*

Wrap up with a scarf - especially over your nose

"[T]he implication of what [our study] found is that when we inhale cold air into the nasal cavity, the temperature in the nose decreases and that will provide a more permissive temperature for the cold virus to replicate. Many of us have the cold virus in our noses without symptoms—about 20 to 25 percent of healthy people carry the virus—and if you are one of those people and you go out in the cold, you might develop symptoms." *Immunobiology professor Akiko Iwasaki, Yale School of Medicine - Today.com*

The more colorful the food, the better

“Immune-boosting antioxidants in brightly colored fruits and veggies battle the free radicals that dampen your natural defenses. Eat plenty of fare such as red beans and berries (the brighter the hue, the higher the antioxidant count) and drink green tea.” *Josh Miller, D.O., internist at Cleveland Clinic* - [Women's Health](#)

Related Applications:

- [Cold Medicine API Screen Using a Kinetex EVO C18 Core-Shell LC Column](#)
- [Acetaminophen, Phenylephrine, Chlorpheniramine and Dextromethorphan by HPLC-UV](#)

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Summary



Article Name

Cold and Flu Season: What's Hugging Got to Do With It?

Description

With cold and flu season upon us, it is important to know what to do in order to stay healthy. We were also able to analyze several different cold medicines.