

# ISSUE 3

## When You Have a Cold

Colds are not fatal, but they assure maximum discomfort to their sufferers. A person with a cold not only coughs and sneezes regularly but also has a runny nose, a fever, a headache, a sore throat, and congested nasal passages all at the same time. It is hard to concentrate or stay awake, yet it is also difficult to fall asleep. Even though it only lasts a day or two in its severe stage, the time of suffering seems endless. An odd but important fact is that, even though the cold is the most common illness known to man, repeatedly affecting nearly everyone, there is no known cure. Antibiotics don't work well because every cold virus is unique.

### Do you rush to see the doctor whenever you get a cold?

- (1) Yes. That's what doctors are for — making us feel better when we're sick — isn't it?
- (2) I just take some aspirin and try to go about my normal routine.
- (3) I relax and stay at home, knowing I'll recover soon.



-congested : blocked with some liquid

-last : continue; go on

-antibiotic : drug used to kill bacteria and cure infections

-unique : being the only one of its kind

# Sample Answers

(A) I always tell myself when I get a cold to just stay at home, drink plenty of liquids, and get lots of sleep until I feel better. But somehow, instead, I try to ignore the cold as much as I can. I take medicine and go to work, but I feel terrible all day, I don't get much accomplished, and I probably just *infect* other people. Maybe next time I'll take my own advice!

(B) Patients want their physician to *relieve* their various medical problems. And the doctors want to be helpful, not only because of their professional obligation but also because they know the patient will find a new doctor if they don't help. But this mutual attitude has led to some very severe problems, related especially to the overuse of antibiotics. So viruses are *adapting* themselves to the most widely used drugs and making them ineffective. So I never go to the doctor for some minor *ailment* like a cold. I want those vaccines to be useful when I really need them!

## Speak Your Mind

1. How often do you feel tired? What do you do at those times?
2. How often do you catch a cold? How do you find relief from it?
3. Do you sometimes have a stomach ache? How do you *cope with* it?
4. Do you ever *suffer from* a headache? Do you take aspirin or deal with it some other way?
5. Do you regularly take vitamins?
6. Have you ever suffered from *insomnia*? What did you do?
7. Are you afraid of the *side effects* of any medicine?

## 7. Are you afraid of the side effects of any medicine?

F : Do you ever worry about the side effects of any medicines you're taking?

M : Why, no. I just follow the instructions carefully. Why do you ask? Is my skin turning green or something?

F : No, but I'm afraid mine might. I hardly ever take medicine, not even aspirin, but my doctor just prescribed a whole *slew* of them for my back pain, and I'm worried about how they might affect me.

M : Well, prescribing medicines is not an exact science. Sometimes the drugs will affect one person differently than another. People have different *tolerances*, and some people are allergic to certain medicines. So if you have any *adverse* effects, it might be a good idea to *discontinue* their use and see your doctor again right away.

F : Yes, that's what the doctor told me. How likely is it that I'll have problems?

M : *The odds are in your favor*. Medicines are pretty *exhaustively* tested before they're allowed on the market, and very few people have any trouble as long as they follow the directions carefully. But there's always that odd exception, so watch yourself. Be careful.

F : This is the reason why I usually avoid medicines: I'm afraid of the after-effects.

M : Being a little cautious is good for everyone, but I wouldn't worry so much. The doctors usually don't offer prescriptions to medicines they're not familiar with.

F : But I hear horror stories about people who follow directions carefully and still have something terrible happen. They get a heart attack or go blind or something like that! I'm very concerned.

M : Usually the side effects are minor but unpleasant. People get *blurred* vision or stomach *cramps* or something like that. But they're just having a bad case of anxiety attack.

F : Really? What do you think I should do?

M : Why don't you see a doctor? He can probably prescribe something else that will calm your *nerves*.

→ *slew* : large number

→ *tolerance* : ability to withstand

→ *adverse* : not favorable; going against or in an opposition direction

→ *discontinue* : stop

→ *the odds are in (sb's) favor* : chances are good

→ *exhaustively* : thoroughly

→ *blurred* : unclear

→ *cramp* : sudden severe pain

→ *nerves* : feeling worried or frightened