

Natural Help 4...

Viral Infections



What is a Viral Infection?

A [virus](#) is a **tiny organism that causes an infection** in the body. [Viruses](#) are made up of the genetic material known as DNA or RNA, which the [virus](#) uses to replicate. In order for a [virus](#) to survive, it must invade and attach itself to a living cell. It will then multiply and produce more [virus](#) particles.

By attaching itself to a host cell, the [virus](#) may either kill or alter the cell's functions. When the cell dies, new [types of viruses](#) are released, and they infect other cells. This is how [viruses](#) cause disease. Generally, [viruses](#) will only infect one type of cell. For example, the cold [virus](#) will only infect cells of the upper respiratory tract.

[Viruses](#) can be transmitted in numerous ways, such as through contact with an infected person, swallowing, inhalation, or unsafe sex. Factors such as poor hygiene and eating habits can increase your risk of contracting a [viral infection](#).

The external barriers, such as the skin and mucous membranes, are the first line of defense. The **body's immune defenses are triggered when the [virus](#) enters the body**, and white blood cells (lymphocytes and monocytes) begin to attack and destroy the [virus](#).

This type of general protection is referred to as **innate or natural immunity**.

Types of Viral Infections

[Viruses](#) can affect any part of the body or body system. The most **common type of viral infections involve the respiratory tract**. For example, the cold [virus](#) involves the upper respiratory tract, viral throat infections, and laryngitis. Lower respiratory tract infections may include viral pneumonia.

The **gastrointestinal system is also commonly affected** by [viruses](#) with symptoms such as diarrhea and/or vomiting. The liver can also be infected by [viruses](#) such as the hepatitis [virus](#) family.

The **skin can also be infected** by a [viral infection](#) such as the common wart or chicken pox. Nervous system viral infections include encephalitis and rabies.

Systemic viral infections can also occur with certain [viruses](#) or when replication of the [virus](#) in the body accelerates unchecked, and the [virus](#) affects multiple body systems. This can be an extremely dangerous condition and usually

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Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this ebook or on ANY website.

requires prompt medical attention. HIV is an example of a systemic [viral infection](#).

Diagnosing Viral Infections

The diagnosis of a [viral infection](#) is usually **based on the physical symptoms and the history of the illness**. A condition such as influenza, which is caused by a [virus](#), is generally easy to diagnose because most people are familiar with the symptoms. Other [types of viral infections](#) may be harder to diagnose and various tests may have to be performed.

Various Diagnostic Tests for Viral Infections

- Blood tests to check for antibodies to [viruses](#), or for the antigens themselves
- Cultures for samples of blood, bodily fluid, or other material taken from the infected area
- Spinal tap to examine the cerebrospinal fluid
- Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) techniques may be used to make many copies of the viral genetic material, enabling doctors to rapidly and accurately identify the [virus](#)
- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) can detect increased swelling in the temporal lobes

Symptoms of Viral Infections

Viral infections come with a variety of symptoms ranging from mild to severe. Symptoms may vary depending on what part of the body is affected, type of [viruses](#), age, and overall health of the affected person.

These symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Muscle aches
- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Runny nose
- Headache
- Chills
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Rash
- Weakness

More severe symptoms include:

- Personality changes
- Neck stiffness
- Dehydration
- Seizures
- Paralysis of the limbs
- Confusion
- Back pain
- Loss of sensation



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Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

- Impaired bladder and bowel function
- Sleepiness that can progress into a coma or death

What Causes Viral Infections?

Human cells are vulnerable to [viruses](#), and when the body is exposed to viral particles, the immune system will try to destroy these particles and eliminate them from the system.

A **lowered immune system** allows the [virus](#) to more easily attach itself to available cells, often bringing about general symptoms such as fever, chills, and muscle aches. This also **makes it easier for the [virus](#) to replicate**, and thus advances symptoms until the immune system can fight the [virus](#) off.

Help for Viral Infections

The best way of [treating human viruses](#) will depend on the strength of the individual's immune system, their overall health status, age, the severity of the condition, and the type of [viruses](#) involved.

Minor illnesses caused by viral infections **usually only require symptomatic treatment**, while more severe conditions may require advanced medical treatment and sometimes even life-long treatment. A combination of treatment options such as conventional medicine, complementary therapy, and **natural medicine can help to fight the infection**, control the symptoms, and strengthen the immune response.

It is important to remember that [treating human viruses](#) cannot be accomplished through antibiotics, and **the unnecessary use of antibiotics can weaken the immune system**, thus increasing the likelihood of contracting another infection.

Conventional Medicine for Viral Infections

- Over-the-counter painkillers and anti-inflammatories such as paracetamol or ibuprofen can reduce symptoms and fever, but **can also have side effects**, especially with long-term or excessive usage.
- Antiviral medication and immune substances such as interferons and immunoglobulins are sometimes prescribed for more serious infections. They can be administered orally, intravenously, intramuscularly, topically, or by inhalation. Because [viruses](#) live within the body's own cells, antiviral medications often have **severe side effects**. In order to kill off the [virus](#), they have to damage the body's cells.
- Antiretroviral therapy suppresses the replication of the human immunodeficiency [virus](#) (HIV), even if there are no symptoms. The aim of treatment is to lower the concentration of [virus](#) (viral load).

Natural Herbal and Homeopathic Remedies for Viral Infection

Natural and holistic remedies used instead of or in conjunction with conventional medicine and other complementary therapies can be extremely effective in

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relieving the symptoms of viral infections and treating human [viruses](#). These types of remedies can **successfully address the underlying cause of the condition** as well as help to maintain the overall physical and emotional health of the individual.

Herbal and homeopathic remedies are gentle and safe to use without the harmful side effects of many prescription medications. Hypoxis rooperi, Agathosma betulina, Mentha piperita, Solidago virgaurea, Viscum album, Crataegus oxycanthoide, Schizandra sinesis, Astragalus membranaceus, and Olea europea are all examples of natural remedies that can help to **promote immune system functioning** and **support the body's ability to fight** against harmful pathogens. Consult a physician, homeopath, or herbalist about a remedy that suits you.

Complementary Therapy

- Acupuncture
- Herbal and homeopathic remedies
- Aruyvedic medications
- Nutritional therapy
- Meditation, psychotherapy, and counseling may be of benefit when there are long-term consequences and psychological implications.

Some Advice on Preventing and Dealing with Viral Infections

There are several ways to **prevent infection and the transmission of germs**. These useful tips can help you to remain healthy and develop a stronger immune system:

- Maintain a **healthy lifestyle** by eating properly, obtaining sufficient rest and exercising regularly.
- **Wash your hands** frequently and thoroughly – before cooking, eating or after visiting the toilet.
- **Avoid contact with someone who has an illness** that you may catch such as a cold, the flu, chickenpox, or measles.
- **Avoid touching your eyes or nose** if you have been in contact with someone who has a cold.
- Practice **good personal hygiene** by showering or bathing everyday, washing your hair, and trimming your nails regularly.
- **Brush and floss** your teeth twice a day, and visit your dentist regularly to prevent infection and cavities.
- Use **cleaning detergents** and rubber gloves when cleaning your home
- Pop sponges and dish cloths into the **microwave to disinfect them**, as they harbor the most germs.
- **Cover your mouth** when you cough or sneeze.
- Do not eat or drink while working with contaminated things or while cleaning up.
- **Practice safe sex**. Using condoms during sexual intercourse will reduce the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.
- **Eat protein and cooked vegetables** at least twice a day as this helps to rebuild the immune system.
- **Drink bottled or filtered water** as it is less likely to be contaminated.



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- Increase your intake of **nutritional supplements** to prevent infections by helping to eliminate toxic substances, improve digestion, and balance body chemistry.
- **Positive attitudes and healthy emotions** also strengthen the immune system and help you to live longer and feel younger and healthier.

The Natural Approach

While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that, only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is ‘better’ than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Natural medicine has often been frowned on by conventional doctors, especially by those who did not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe, India and China, natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed by conventional doctors and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the body has an innate capacity to heal itself. While natural medicines are often called ‘alternative’ or ‘complimentary’ medicines, they are, in fact, a unique and independent form of medicine in their own right, well able to treat a variety of conditions. Perhaps the term ‘holistic’ medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine, which encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to support health (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer and that, in many cases, holistic medicine can accomplish just as much, if not more – without the risk of side

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effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing.

In many cases, they can succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed. Despite frequent reports that they are ‘unproven’ and ‘untested’, the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a long history of usage and there is a wealth of empirical evidence to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines.

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines must be manufactured in the correct way, following acceptable procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called ‘standardized’ extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While ‘standardized’ extracts may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have grave disadvantages. These include an increase in side effects as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, always choose wisely. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life threatening condition, don’t make changes without first discussing them with your doctor in order that your condition may be monitored. Well informed and supportive practitioners will support patients who want to take responsibility for their own health.

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The formula remains true to the **whole spectrum method** of herbal extraction, ensuring the bioavailability and balance of all the active ingredients contained in

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