

# How-to-do-it

# Fight the flu blues

**NATALIE TIMPERIO**  
SENIOR INSIDEOUT EDITOR

A sudden onset of body aches and pain, fever, headache, fatigue, and a cough causing you to nearly pee your pants leaves you stranded hopelessly in bed. It's no common cold—it's the flu. F\*#K!

The last thing you need is to be struck ill with that awful F-word of a virus. Maybe you shouldn't have walked out the door this morning without a coat—yes, spring is fast approaching, but the negative symbol appearing on your local weather channel should indicate that it may be a little too soon to swear off all winter wear.

Or, maybe you shouldn't have had that smush fest (thank you Jersey Shore for expanding my vocabulary) with that random over spring break—although you can consider yourself lucky if this is the only virus you picked up.

Regardless of how you got to this point, there's no better way to deal with the flu than to ingest

large quantities of over-the-counter cough syrup in addition to daytime/nighttime flu pills. Add tequila shots to the mix and you're sure to enjoy a reasonably breezy recovery.

In all seriousness, there are numerous ways to not only prevent contracting the flu amongst other related illnesses, but also ways to make your recovery as comfortable as humanly possible without the incessant use of drugstore medications (although I wouldn't rule out the alcohol).

Although most of this should already be known, I question people's knowledge of basic hygiene.

**Duck and cover**

Don't sneeze or cough into your hands without sanitizing afterwards. Although this would be a step up from sneezing or coughing without covering your mouth area, no one wants to be a second hand cougher. So spare your fellow folks and sneeze or cough into your arm, sleeve or a tissue. It's recommended

that you still wash your hands afterwards. In fact, wash your hands incessantly—this is one time in which obsessively sanitizing is more than justified.

**Wash, wash and wash**

Although you may not be able to do much else other than lay in bed moaning with every movement (not in the preferred way), washing your hands is an easy enough task. If you're fully unable to remove yourself from the mattress, then ensure that hand sanitizer is within reach.

Great! Now you're at least semi-set for flu prevention. But what of flu recovery? I hate to be the bearer of bad news but unless you're into the whole flu shot deal (which of course would have prevented you from getting the flu in the first place) there's no definitive way to recover from such awfulness.

Here are some coping tips, but as a Humanities student working as an amateur journalist

I cannot guarantee you that any of this will work successfully.

**Comfy and cared for**

Nothing is better than mom's homemade chicken noodle soup when you've got the flu. Allowing yourself to get as comfortable as possible with some hot liquids will surely soothe any associated pain and discomfort. I find cuddling with a childhood stuffed animal to be a great help—no joking! If for some reason you're unable to enjoy the comforts of home, then send a friend out to get you some canned chicken soup and what have you—at least this will provide some level of comfort as opposed to you whining hopelessly alone.

**Drugstores are dope**

Don't dope yourself up on drugstore medicines, but don't rule out the potential effectiveness of what your local Shoppers Drug Mart has to offer. NeoCitran and other related products can provide

some much needed alleviation of sick symptoms when you need it the most. Just follow the instructions on the package and you should have no worry of overdosage.

**Go natural**

No, I don't mean go naked. Although, if wearing your birthday suit makes you feel better then by all means go nude! Just shut all blinds beforehand. If you're paranoid about taking drugstore medications then consider some natural methods.

Chewing a raw, salted garlic clove naturally boosts the immune system. Gargling warm saltwater also helps to clear bacteria from the throat area where germs tend to congregate. If you can't stomach some of these natural medicines, they are also available in capsules.

All in all, I wish you nothing but the best possible recovery from the flu or whatever other ailment you are stricken with.



**KATIE FERGUSON**  
SHEC

This past September the McMaster Students Union (MSU) began a partnership with Canadian Blood Services in a program called *Partners for Life* and pledged a goal of 450 units of blood to be donated by the end of 2010.

With the support of the Student Health Education Centre (SHEC) this goal was exceeded with an impressive 545 total units donated.

This term the goal is set even higher, as McMaster is currently involved in a challenge

called Blood 101. This is an annual student-led blood donor competition aimed at recruiting and retaining donors within universities, colleges and technical campuses across Canada.

With your generous donation of blood, the MSU has the chance to win one of three titles: the school with the highest participation rate, the school that collects the most units of blood, or the school with the highest number of first-time donors.

As this is the first year we are competing in the Blood 101 challenge, to win a title would be an impressive way for the MSU to

begin in *Partners for Life*.

The need for blood continues to grow every day and thus the need for donors increases as well. Currently, baby boomers represent the largest percentage of blood donors in Canada, and as this dedicated group of donors age, many become recipients themselves.

This means that there is a need for more young Canadians to give blood. The MSU is proud to report that of the 545 units donated last fall, 187 of them were from new donors.

Donating blood is an easy, safe and rewarding act of kindness that can impact or save up to three lives. You must be at least 17 years of age, weigh at least 50kg (110 lbs) and be in general good health.

On the day of your donation you should be feeling well, have had adequate sleep, and something to eat and drink.

Upon arrival at the clinic a test will be administered to determine whether you meet the haemoglobin (iron) requirements and you will be asked a number of questions for eligibility purposes. Canadian Blood Services takes appropriate measures to ensure the confidentiality of your personal information. Many students say they are willing to donate blood, but that they haven't had the time or opportunity to do so. Well McMaster, this is your time.

Blood clinics on campus will be taking place:  
**Tuesday March 8**

**10:30am-5pm 3rd Floor MUSC, CIBC Hall**  
**Friday March 25**  
**10:30am-5pm 3rd Floor MUSC, CIBC Hall**  
**Tuesday March 29 10am-3:30pm Ewart Angus Centre**

To book your appointment call 1-888-2DONATE, or visit SHEC in MUSC 202 and receive a free box of Kraft Dinner! Walk-ins on the day of clinics are also welcome.

For any questions regarding the MSU's partnership with Canadian Blood Services please feel free to contact Katie Ferguson, SHEC Coordinator at shec@msu.mcmaster.ca or (905) 525-9140 ext. 22041.

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