



## IF YOU'RE... AROUND CHILDREN A LOT

### THE GERM RISK

Whether you work with children or have your own, you'll know how susceptible they – and so you – are to every cold, 'flu or tummy bug. 'Children's immune systems are still learning and won't have built up the same resistance you have,' says Dr Nauf AIBendar, a medical scientist specialising in genetics and nutrition (thewombeffect.co). 'Those under six can get up to eight colds a year and their symptoms last longer. Toddlers, especially, don't have the most hygienic habits, so they come in contact with a much broader spectrum of pathogens – which they then pass on to you.'

### YOUR ACTION PLAN

Encourage – and model – good hygiene habits: frequent handwashing with soap, and using then disposing of tissues for sneezing, nose-blowing and coughs. 'Nasal irrigation with a saline spray is a good way to wash viral particles from infants' noses before they have a chance to take hold and proliferate,' says Dr AIBendar. Try **Sterimar Breathe Easy Baby**, £4.49, superdrug.com, or for adults **Sterimar Cold Defence**, £4.87; boots.com.

'Extracts of the herb echinacea do seem to have an effect on the immune system by increasing the number of white blood cells which fight infections,' she says. One

study found a 32.1 per cent reduced risk of cold and 'flu episodes in children given **A.Vogel Echinaforce Chewable Tablets**, £6 for 40, avogel.co.uk.

'You can also try boosting the beneficial bugs in your child's gut,' says Dr AIBendar. 'Certain strains, such as Lactobacillus and Bifidobacteria have been shown to reduce the frequency of fevers, cold and 'flus.' Try **Bio-Kult Infantis**, £12.65 for 16 sachets; waitrose.com.

The 'flu vaccine is routinely given to primary school children and pregnant women and health workers, but you can also pay to have one. It's not 100 effective, as 'flu strains can mutate over the season, but it offers good protection.

### IF YOU FALL ILL

'Pelargonium is licenced as a traditional herbal remedy for upper respiratory tract infections,' says Dr Chris

Etheridge, chair of the British Herbal Medicine Association. 'It has proven immunomodulating, antibacterial and expectorant properties.' Try **Kaloba Pelargonium Cough & Cold Relief Oral Drops**, £8.99 for 20ml; hollandandbarrett.com.

### Health & Fitness promotion **COLDS & FLU CURE**

Fight colds and flu this winter with HRI Coldcare, a traditional herbal medicine with three times the immunity power, thanks to extracts of the potent echinacea herb, plus 100 per cent RDA of vitamin C and zinc per dose. HRI Coldcare carries the THR logo for the highest quality and safety in Europe. Find it at Morrisons, ASDA, Sainsbury's, Superdrug and Holland & Barrett; £7.99 for 30 tablets.



**'While exercise is key to good health, too much can be draining and cause inflammation'**

