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## SEVEN TIPS TO HELP YOU PREVENT A SORE THROAT

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Want to do all you can to avoid developing a sore throat?

Try these seven tips:

1. Avoid smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke. Tobacco smoke, whether primary or secondary, contains hundreds of toxic chemicals that can irritate the throat lining.
2. If you have seasonal allergies or ongoing allergic reactions to dust, molds, or pet dander, you're more likely to develop a sore throat than people who don't have allergies. Treatment of seasonal or environmental allergies can decrease this risk.
3. Avoid exposure to chemical irritants. Particles in the air from the burning of fossil fuels, as well as common household chemicals, can cause throat irritation. Wearing a mask may be helpful to decrease exposure, in certain situations.
4. If you experience frequent sinus infections or have chronic post nasal drip, drainage from your nose or sinuses can cause throat irritation as well. Rinsing the nose with salt water may help decrease this drainage.
5. If you live or work in close quarters such as a child care center, classroom, office, dormitory, prison, or military installation, you may be at greater risk of sore throat because viral and bacterial infections spread easily in environments where people are in close proximity. Minimizing contact with persons who are, or may be, sick and washing your hands frequently can help prevent the spread of infection.
6. Maintain good hygiene. Do not share napkins, towels, and utensils with an infected person. Wash your hands regularly with soap or a sanitizing gel for at least 10 - 15 seconds.
7. If you have reduced immunity (from HIV or diabetes, steroid treatment or chemotherapy, a poor diet, or extreme fatigue, for example), you may be more susceptible to infections in general.