Recipes for success with Seasonal Flu Prevention

It’s that time of year when coughs, colds and seasonal flu seem to spread easily. Follow these simple tips to avoid spreading illness this winter.

* **Wash your hands frequently** using warm water and soap, scrubbing all surfaces for about 15-20 seconds. Some flu viruses can live up to two hours on surfaces such as desks, phones and door knobs. When soap and water are not available, hand sanitizers containing 60-90% ethyl alcohol or isopropanol may be used.

* **Avoid touching your face**, unless you have clean hands. The eyes, nose and mouth are entry ports for flu viruses.

* **Cover your mouth** with a disposable tissue when coughing and sneezing. Dispose of tissues and wash your hands immediately.

* **Avoid sharing objects** (cups, utensils, Wipe down shared equipment such as phones and keyboards.

* **Get enough sleep and manage your stress.** Lack of sleep and high levels of stress can reduce immune functioning, thus lowering the body’s ability to fend off colds and flu.

* **Drink more water.** You may not feel as thirsty during fall and winter, but it’s important to make sure you don’t get dehydrated. Consume at least 8 glasses a day.

* **Maintain a moderate exercise program** 3-4 days a week. It will strengthen the immune system and increase the body’s natural ability to fight infection.

* **Eat healthfully.** Remember to eat the recommended 5-9 servings per day of fruits and vegetables.