

Dry Air Syndrome (DAS) aka Cold Weather Dehydration

Do you have a case of the "nose that won't stop running", or a sinus congestion that you are absolutely OVER!"?

When the heat comes on, the air we breath becomes dehydrated which in turn causes our skin and our mucus membranes to dry out. Dry, mucus membranes can swell and cause added discomfort. This situation then allows dust, dust mites, other allergens, viruses, and bacteria a better chance to invade our bodies. Excessively dry skin can crack and become very painful.

Our first line of defense against the germs that cause viruses and bacteria is our skin's integrity and a healthy respiratory system. So when they become compromised, we are at greater risk for illness as dust, dust mites, environmental allergens, viruses and bacteria are much more able to invade.

Are your lips and hands dry and cracked? Take the scratch test. Gently scratch your forearm with your fingernail. Does it leave a white mark? If it does, you are dry, dry, dry on the outside and the inside.

During warm weather we perspire and we become thirstier. This helps us to remember to drink more water. Truth be told, thirst is the body's way of telling us that we have used an excess of water and need **even more** than the 64 oz of water normally required in a day. In cold weather months, we just tend to forget to drink. Tea, decaffeinated beverages and juices don't hydrate us because all of them have diuretic properties.

Beware of bottled water. Check labels as many manufacturers add sodium to their water to make you buy and drink more bottled water!

So slather on the moisturizing lotion right after you shower while you're still wet to help trap the water that is on your skin. You can use a humidifier in the bedroom, or whole house, but be careful to use a humistat as too much hydration can cause mold spores to grow and that is not good.

For those dry noses and annoying sinuses, use a salt water nasal spray (Saline nasal spray), or nose drops, several times a day to re-hydrate mucus membranes and flush sinuses. Most grocery stores and drug stores stock these over the counter remedies.

And start drinking that water! Don't like water? It takes 21 days to form a new habit. Fill a travel mug, or take bottled water with you in the morning. You will find yourself sipping on it if you have it handy instead of heading to the coffee shop or vending machines. For some water is an "acquired" taste, but once you have it...nothing else will satisfy.

H 2 OCheers!