

The best ways to spend a sick day



Try as we might to stay healthy, getting sick is something we all have to deal with at some point. If you find yourself under the weather, taking a sick day (or two) is one of the best ways to get better faster and prevent spreading an infectious illness to others.

So what are some things you can do to help make staying home sick a little more bearable? Here, we've collected a few tips for making the most of your day at home, even if you are feeling at your worst.

Perfect the art of doing nothing

In today's busy world, some of us may have the impulse to check a few things off our to-do list while taking a day off from our work or other personal responsibilities. However, the best way to get better is to focus on doing nothing at all. Here are some tips to help you do, well, nothing at all:



Take a break from your phone and computer. This can help keep stress levels low and prevent the temptation to read the news or respond to work emails or calls.



Put away the to-do list. Non-urgent tasks like cleaning the house, doing the laundry or working in the yard, garden or garage can wait.



Ask for help from friends, neighbors or family. Sometimes, there are tasks that can't wait. For urgent or necessary things like picking up a prescription, walking the dog or getting the kids from school, ask for help. For an extra-special touch, send your helper a handwritten thank-you card once you're feeling better, and promise to return the favor.

Keep your energy up with healthy meals and hydration

Another way to get better faster is to ensure that your body is getting all the right nutrients and water it needs. Here are some tips to make it easier for you to eat healthily and stay hydrated while sick:



Track your fluid intake, and drink at least 64 oz of water each day.



Keep frozen popsicles or lemonade on hand for your sick days. The cool liquid will feel good if you're feverish or have a sore throat, and the frozen treats can deliver some additional fluids.



Make a sick day kit. While you're healthy, stock up on chicken broth, herbal teas like elderberry or ginger tea, and honey. While you're at it, don't forget the cold and flu meds, aspirin and ibuprofen.



Keep a few healthy frozen meals or leftovers in the freezer. This way, you can still eat well without having to cook a meal from scratch.



The next time you make a batch of soup or stew, double the recipe and freeze the extra for homemade soup that's ready in minutes. Try this [chicken noodle soup recipe](#) from Livongo.

Indulge in some sick day self-care

Taking care of yourself can feel good, even if you don't. Try some of these restful activities:



Take a hot bath or shower. The hot water will relax you, and the steam can soothe raw or congested nasal passages. Add Epsom salts to your bath to help relax achy muscles.



Put lavender and lemongrass essential oils in an air diffuser, or rub skin-safe mint oils on your chest and forehead. Inhale the goodness, and exhale the illness.



Catch up on your favorite shows, or put on your favorite movie. If your head hurts too much to watch TV, try a podcast instead so you can listen with your eyes closed.



Sleep. Your body needs extra sleep while you're sick, so nap as much as you want. Keep your room cool and dark to help you rest, or wear an eye mask to block out light.

See a doctor

If you're sick, seeing a doctor can help you feel better faster and prevent a more serious infection. Here are different care options for when you're feeling under the weather:



Request a telehealth visit for:

- Flu-like symptoms (mild fever, sore throat, chills, aches)
- Sinus infections (nasal congestion, pain or pressure in the sinuses, discolored mucus)
- Bronchitis (coughing, phlegm)
- Nasal allergy symptoms (itchy, watery eyes, sneezing, coughing)
- COVID-19 advice
- Stomachache



Go to urgent care for:

- Earaches
- Sprains
- Minor cuts



Go to the emergency room for:

- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Burns
- Broken bones

Getting sick is never fun, but using these tips, you can make a sick day at home a little more tolerable.

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