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## MYTHS ABOUT COLD AND FLU SUPPLEMENTS THAT ARE NOTHING TO SNEEZE AT

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Cold and flu season is upon us. **According to NYC certified fitness trainer, exercise physiologist and nutritionist Franci Cohen**, the majority of the population has some major myths when it comes to supplements. Below are some of the most commonly used remedies broken down by Franci.

1. **Zinc:** High levels of zinc can actually compromise your immune system and make you sicker. This is because high levels of zinc can interfere with how your body uses iron, which can lead to fatigue and anemia. In addition, zinc and copper compete for absorption in the body, and zinc usually wins. How? Zinc binds to something called metallothionein in copper, rendering it un-absorbable in the body. This is problematic, as copper plays a vital role in the function of the immune system. Copper deficiency causes low white blood cells and increases the risk of infection.
2. **Vitamin C:** Vitamin C is a water-soluble vitamin, as opposed to fat soluble vitamins like A, D, E and K, which get stored in the body. As a water-soluble vitamin, the body can only hold a certain amount of Vitamin C at a time. That amount is capped off at 180 mg. So those taking tablets up to 2500mg are not getting any added benefits as the body absorbs 180mg and getting rid of the rest. So, while Vitamin C may help a cold go away sooner, just make sure to take it wisely. Take it in divided doses throughout the day, in order to ensure maximum absorption.
3. **Echinacea:** While Echinacea has been known to help at the onset of a cold, there are no clinical studies that show it will make a cold go away. People think that if they load up on Echinacea, their cold will go away faster and this can cause problems. Too much Echinacea has been shown to drastically increase symptoms on those who suffer from asthma. And prolonged use, for anyone, can cause liver problems and. Doctors advise to never take Echinacea for longer than six to eight weeks consistently.
4. **Monolaurin:** This is a chemical made from lauric acid (a saturated fat found in coconut oil and human breast milk.) Research shows that monolaurin may be able to combat bacteria and viruses in test tubes, but no research has shown it to have any effect on humans. However, it has been deemed safe when consumed in food products and used in cosmetic products.