

BRUNCH

Wellness

The cup that cures

Yes, it's true. Hot drinks *can* actually drive colds away. Take a sip of one of these
by Veenu Singh



THE CHILL is finally setting in, and we're wracked by sore throats, coughs and colds. So hot drinks are in order, from *adhrak chai* to chicken soup. These don't only soothe a sore throat, but also help us breathe better, says Dr Sandeep Budhiraja, head of internal medicine, Max Healthcare, Delhi. "When you have a cough and cold, the nose, sinuses, vocal chords and wind pipe get blocked," says Dr Budhiraja. "When you drink something hot, it helps decongest the system and provides a soothing effect to the throat."

Here are a few hot drinks to choose from:

HERBAL TEA: Try herbal teas or add lemon, ginger and honey to your tea. "Lemon provides vitamin C which improves the body's immune system and ginger is warming," says Honey Khanna, head of dietary department, Max Healthcare, Pitampura. "Honey soothes a sore throat. Chamomile tea is known to have anti-bacterial properties."

HOT CHOCOLATE: Make it dark chocolate because it has a high cocoa content, which means a higher level of flavonoids that act as antioxidants. Moreover, flavonoids also help ease a persistent cough. "The darker the chocolate, the better it is," says Karan Singh, COO of Cosmic Kitchen, Delhi. "Theobromine, a component in cocoa, relieves coughs."

CHICKEN OR MUTTON SOUP: "Hot chicken or mutton soup is high in minerals like zinc that resist infections and clear clogged airways, and the nourishing broth gives you energy," says Honey Khanna. "Add plenty of vegetables, including onion and garlic, for extra healing power."

COUS COUS AND VEGETABLE BROTH: "Cous cous has great digestive properties, is low on fat and sodium, and contains good cholesterol," says Karan Singh. "This soup has all essential amino acids, minerals and vitamins, including B-Complex."

RASAM: "The spices help clear the nasal passage and relieve a sore throat," says Sharon Arora, dietitian at G M Modi Hospital, Delhi.

HOT TODDY: "A hot toddy is a mix of brandy and honey, lemon and tea. The honey and lemon act on your cold and the brandy provides warmth, making you feel better instantly," says Suresh, bartender at QBA, Delhi.

HOT WATER WITH GINGER: Boil ginger till the water is reduced to a fourth of its original quantity. Add honey. "For higher therapeutic value, add *tulsi* or mint," says Sharon Arora.

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