



Q ■ **"I have to travel a lot for work and I always seem to catch a cold when I fly. How can I fight off bugs when I travel by plane?"**

As if jet lag weren't bad enough, it's not uncommon to pick up a virus as a trip souvenir, too. While you may not be able to shield yourself totally from germs while you're rubbing elbows with 200 people in the airport lounge and aboard the plane, the best way to reduce your risk of catching a cold is to get away from anyone with a hacking cough, says **Dr. Mark Wise**, a specialist in travel and tropical medicine at The Travel Clinic in Toronto. The closer you are to the respiratory droplets your fellow passengers are sharing, the more likely you are to catch whatever they've got. So if you can afford it, fly business class, where you'll have

contact with fewer people. If the passenger beside you is sneezing and coughing, request another seat on the flight. If you can't relocate, spend some time standing in the aisle and wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer throughout your journey. Also, since one of our best natural defences against respiratory viruses such as colds is having moist nasal receptors, be sure to stay hydrated before you leave home and while onboard. Saline sprays also help keep nasal lining moist in the dry air at 30,000 feet.

Q: "I'm plagued with yeast infections. I use the over-the-counter treatments, but as soon as I get rid of one infection, I seem to get another one. Help!"

Start by visiting your doctor to make sure that what you've got is candida (an overgrowth of

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yeast in the bowel) rather than a bacterial infection, says Toronto-based doctor of naturopathic medicine **Zorana Rose**. Once you're sure it's a yeast infection, consider what might be triggering it. Poor diet, stress, antibiotics, a reduced immune system and hormonal changes (for example, when you stop using the pill or become pregnant) are all potential factors. It's also wise to avoid douching, scented soaps, feminine-hygiene sprays and scented tampons, which all affect the pH of the vagina, making women more susceptible to yeast growth. Consider the possibility, too, that you and your partner may be passing an infection back and forth during sex. Your partner may not have the obvious symptoms you have, so get him to see a doctor for a blood test and treatment

if necessary. If you're not having luck with over-the-counter treatments, seek out a naturopathic doctor who may prescribe vaginal suppositories. Since studies have shown that you have to treat your whole body to get rid of yeast (otherwise it will reoccur), try an anti-candida diet for three weeks. Avoid refined sugar and foods such as bread and alcohol, which contain and feed yeast. Yogurt and whole grains help inhibit yeast and support healthy bacteria in the gut lining; acidophilus supplements restore healthy bacteria in the intestines; tea-tree oil and grapefruit-seed extract may help as well. Consult your doctor or a naturopath before using them. **Send us your health questions. Email healthyask@flare.com or mail to: Health: You Ask, FLARE, 1 Mount Pleasant Rd., 8th Floor, Toronto, Ont., M4Y 2Y5.**

FLARE tip

Women who reach for cereal in the morning are 30 percent less

likely to be overweight than those who don't, according to a recent study in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. Cereal eaters eat more fibre and less fat, which has been linked to better diet control, say the Michigan State University researchers. And breakfast skippers tend to make up for their missed morning meal by consuming more calorie-laden foods later in the day.

