



“It’s too cold to go outside!!”

Or "Don't go outside with a wet head, you'll catch your death of cold!"
It's a warning that's been passed from one generation of parents to the next.
However, scientists for years have proven that people do not get sick
or catch colds from going outside in the cold weather.

What Causes Colds?

Going outside in cold weather does not cause colds or the flu. Colds are actually caused by viruses. You need to be exposed to the cold virus in order to get sick. Cold viruses and illnesses are transmitted person-to-person when a sick person sneezes or coughs on or nearby another person. Kids are also more likely to catch colds during fall and winter time, simply because that's when they're at school and are indoors more often¹. Also, the close quarters of most classrooms provides an ideal breeding ground for germs. To date, there is no experimental evidence that exposure to cold temperatures increases the chances that you will get a cold².

Why go outside in the cold?

The benefits of outdoor play for children are numerous. As our society becomes increasingly more technical, more children are opting to stay indoors. But there remains a real need for every child to feel the sun and wind on his cheek and to engage in outdoor play, regardless of the season. Research has shown us that physical activity improves children’s attentiveness and it decreases restlessness allowing them to perform better in the classroom. Research has also shown us the physical benefits of outdoor play -- children are physically more fit and are better able to fight off illnesses³. As well, unstructured physical play is a great outlet for reducing stress in our children’s lives.

Winter Health tips⁴:

- Frequent hand washing and teaching your child to cover up their sneeze or cough will help reduce the spread of colds and flu.
- Children should be dressed appropriately to go outside. This includes wearing a hat, gloves, scarf, snow pants, snow boots and a proper winter coat.
- If your child is sick and is unable to enjoy the outdoors, please keep them at home to avoid spreading their illness to others.

Resources:

¹ [Pediatrics](#)

² [National Institute of Health](#)

³ [CDC:Extreme Weather](#)

⁴ [American Heart Association](#)

