

Who Are You Going To Blame For Your Cold?

by Dr. Steven Heidinger,
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Here we are, weeks before Christmas and for our family we are soon to be attending our kids' Christmas concerts for school. And along with enjoying the traditional standards of Jingle Bells and Have a Holly Jolly Christmas, there will be the predictable chorus of barking coughs. "Merry Christmas, here is a virus I got special for you."

We are smack dab in the middle of the flu and cold season, a season that we like to also play the viral blame game. "Yeah, my daughter came home from school last week coughing and snotting, and now we all have the cold!" Or "I'm sick because my co-worker was sick and didn't stay home when she should have!"

While I do agree that being exposed to viruses makes you more susceptible to getting sick, it doesn't necessarily mean you will get sick. Think about all the other people at work who were exposed to the same sick person, yet

did not get sick. Were they just lucky? Instead of blaming others for you getting sick, maybe it's time to look at yourself and direct the blame in your direction. That is, "It's not you, it's me."

I don't believe cold and flu season can be solely blamed on the fact that Canadians spend more time inside, around others this time of year. This is also the time of year when we eat crappier, drink more alcohol, stress more, are less active and get less Vitamin D-stimulating sunshine.

While these should be year-round practices, cold and flu season is the time when we may need to be extra vigilant in committing to a healthy lifestyle.

Exercise. Research has shown that regular exercise can reduce the chance of getting a cold by 50 percent and for those who do catch a cold, the symptoms are approximately 30 percent less severe in those who are active.

Diet. I know it drives the economy, but seriously, the second Halloween is over the Christmas crap goes on the shelves at the grocery stores. Kids' Halloween bags are not even empty and the Christmas treats are finding their way into school lunch boxes. Christmas baking is well underway,

and nearly everyone gives and gets a coffee shop gift card to be spent on that donut or danish or "triple-triple." Sugar is just an open invitation to any virus floating by.

Stress. Chronic stress weakens your immune system. This makes you more susceptible to getting sick from ANYTHING!, even the common cold. Especially at this time of the year, try to simplify the holidays. Decide what is really important and stick to a plan of spending and how much time you are going to dedicate towards other peoples' invitations and expectations. It really is okay to be selfish sometimes and concentrate on what you really want the holidays to be all about.

Vitamin D. There is good evidence showing how lack of this vitamin weakens the immune system. And for most Canadians, the amount of sunlight the body gets at this time of the year to stimulate Vitamin D production is almost nil. From mid-October to mid-April, I always maximize my Vitamin D supplementation.

Stop blaming others for you getting sick. Start building your own defences.

Head \$tart on a Home Project Opens in Moose Jaw By Janet Kilgannon For Moose Jaw Express

"Today, the community of Moose Jaw is celebrating the official opening of Maple View Condominiums, an affordable housing project consisting of 12 apartment-style units for moderate-income, entry-level homebuyers," said Wanda Hunchak of Westcap Mgt.

Located at 418-422 Home Street West, this condominium unit features 12 two-bedroom apartment-style units, ranging from 1,100-1,300 square feet. It has been built with the expert partnership of Westcap, the Government of Saskatchewan, the City of Moose Jaw, Schultz Electric and Conexus Credit Union.

"Head \$tart was launched in the province in 2011, to address the need for affordable housing. Once the provincial economy began to grow significantly, house prices increased, too. This program fills the gap for entry-level buyers," said Hunchak.

"In fact, we have almost doubled the expected number of homes we expected to be involved with. We are now at 1,521 units, when we had only planned for 1,000. An additional 354 units have been approved for financing but are not yet under construction."

MLA Greg Lawrence congratulated the group for assisting in achieving home ownership goals for 12 Moose Jaw individuals and families. "We have met the challenges of providing safe, affordable quality homes in our current economy." Downpayment assistance is available through both the provincial and city governments, at \$5,000 from each.

Mayor Deb Higgins felt that the partnership has been excellent. "This provides a huge step forward for



Ribbon cutting ceremony (l-r) Wanda Hunchak, Glen Stephenson, MLA Greg Lawrence, Brett Schultz, Mayor Deb Higgins.

young families for whom the challenge of raising a down payment has been the greatest single barrier, making home ownership previously out of reach. When people can buy a home, they will put down roots, build their careers, raise their families and be active members of our community," she said.

There is currently \$200 million in financing available through the program. Municipalities may apply for the loans on behalf of builders and developers. Moose Jaw City Council "showed foresight and progressive thinking by stepping up to the plate and getting involved early."

Schultz Electric oversaw the building of the units, and made sure the quality was high. Aesthetic touches can be seen throughout. Schultz believes Moose Jaw is a growing area, and good things are to come.

Westcap knew that once they had linked with good builders, they also would need a partner for making the financing happen. Conexus was there to provide the expertise. Glen Stephenson, of the High St. branch, commented that the project fits their core values of supporting the community. "We have the specialists



Outside view of the Maple View Condominiums.

to get people into their own homes, helping to build their dreams and their futures."

There is currently \$10 million that can be tapped in the Head \$tart Equity Building program. The target price for homes constructed through Head \$tart on a Home is at, or below, the MLS average price in each community. The homes may include condominiums, multi-unit dwellings, single-family dwellings, or modular homes.



Balcony view of the Fourth Street Bridge and ravine.