

# www.**Breaking News English**.com

Ready-to-use ESL / EFL Lessons

## **The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

“1,000 Ideas & Activities For Language Teachers”

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/book.html>

## **Keep warm to avoid colds: scientists**

URL: <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0511/051115-colds.html>

## **Contents**

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading	7
Discussion	8
Speaking	9
Homework	10
Answers	11

**15 November, 2005**

## **THE ARTICLE**

### **Keep warm to avoid colds: scientists**

For years people have claimed it to be an old wives' tale that inclement weather could bring on a cold, but now scientists have found that wrapping up warm does help prevent colds. Scientists scoffed for years at the notion of cold weather bringing on the chills, but researchers from the Common Cold Center at Cardiff University in the U.K will report this week that a major cause of the common cold is simple exposure to cold weather. The center is the world's only facility dedicated to researching and testing new medicines for the treatment of influenza and colds. The researchers suggest that keeping one's feet and nose warm reduces the likelihood of catching a cold. They further recommend that the best precautions for avoiding a cold are to wear a warm hat and keep your feet dry.

Dr. Ronald Eccles said cold weather makes us more prone to illness: "Chilling causes a constriction in the blood vessels in the nose, and this reduces our resistance to infections within the nose." Dr. Eccles and his fellow researchers studied 180 test volunteers, who were split into two groups. Half of the volunteers immersed their bare feet in bowls of icy water for 20 minutes, while the others kept their feet dry. The researchers discovered that the volunteers who plunged their feet into cold water were more susceptible to catching a cold. About 29 percent of them developed cold-like symptoms within five days, compared with only nine percent for those who kept their socks on. Dr. Eccles said: "Mothers can now be confident in their advice to children to wrap up well in winter."

## WARM-UPS

**1. HEALTHY ME:** Chat to your partners about your health. Have you stayed healthy this year? Are you susceptible to catching colds? Do you have a strong constitution? Do you often take days off sick? Find out who is the least prone to illnesses.

**2. AVOIDING COLDS:** What do you do to avoid colds? Discuss with your partner(s) the following ideas. Why do you think they might help prevent catching a cold? Which ones would you like to try?

- Avoid touching your nose and eyes
- Gargle three times a day
- Drink a glass of red wine a day
- Wash your hands after shaking hands
- Sleep 8 - 10 hours a night
- Stop smoking
- Wear a hat and two pairs of socks
- Eat lots of oranges and lemons
- Never skip eating breakfast
- Drink chicken soup

**3. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

*Old wives' tales / inclement weather / catching colds / preventing colds / influenza / hats / blood vessels / infections / icy water / socks / advice to children / winter*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

**4. WARM:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "warm". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**5. OLD WIVES' TALES:** Talk about these "old wives' tales" with your partner. Do you think they are true? Are there similar tales in your country? Why do you think people believe these?

- a. An apple a day keeps the doctor away.
- b. Count the seeds inside an apple to find out how many children you'll have.
- c. It's bad luck to sleep with your head facing north.
- d. Blow out all the candles on your birthday cake in one puff and your dreams will come true.
- e. If you get goose bumps, it means someone is walking over your grave.
- f. If you step on a crack in the pavement, bad luck will come.
- g. Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> is an unlucky day.
- h. Pulling out one gray hair will cause ten more gray hairs to grow in its place.
- i. Hang a horseshoe above the doorway of your house to bring good luck.
- j. If you dream about a snake, something that's bad in your life will disappear.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. Scientists have said that saunas are the best way to prevent colds. T / F
- b. A scientist reports that wrapping up warm helps prevent colds. T / F
- c. There are many centers in the world researching medicines for colds. T / F
- d. Keeping your nose and feet warm will not protect you against colds. T / F
- e. Cold weather relaxes and expands the blood vessels in the nose. T / F
- f. Volunteers put their feet in icy cold water for 20 minutes. T / F
- g. Nine percent of volunteers who kept their socks on caught a cold. T / F
- h. A doctor said mothers need more confidence when advising children. T / F

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| a. old wives' tale | tightening            |
| b. inclement       | derided               |
| c. scoffed         | vulnerable            |
| d. notion          | signs                 |
| e. precautions     | idea                  |
| f. prone           | plunged               |
| g. constriction    | popular belief        |
| h. immersed        | preventative measures |
| i. susceptible     | susceptible           |
| j. symptoms        | wintry                |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |                                   |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. people have claimed it to      | to cold weather               |
| b. wrapping up warm               | for avoiding a cold           |
| c. Scientists scoffed for years   | be an old wives' tale         |
| d. exposure                       | catching a cold               |
| e. the best precautions           | at the notion                 |
| f. cold weather makes us          | feet in bowls of icy water    |
| g. reduces our resistance         | does help prevent colds       |
| h. volunteers immersed their bare | to wrap up well in winter     |
| i. more susceptible to            | more prone to illness         |
| j. their advice to children       | to infections within the nose |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

### Keep warm to avoid colds: scientists

For years people have \_\_\_\_\_ it to be an old wives' tale that inclement weather could bring on a cold, but now scientists have found that \_\_\_\_\_ up warm does help prevent colds. Scientists \_\_\_\_\_ for years at the notion of cold weather bringing on the \_\_\_\_\_, but researchers from the Common Cold Center at Cardiff University in the U.K will report this week that a major cause of the common cold is simple \_\_\_\_\_ to cold weather. The center is the world's only facility \_\_\_\_\_ to researching and testing new medicines for the treatment of influenza and colds. The researchers suggest that keeping one's feet and nose warm reduces the \_\_\_\_\_ of catching a cold. They further recommend that the best precautions for \_\_\_\_\_ a cold are to wear a warm hat and keep your feet dry.

*dedicated*

*chills*

*wrapping*

*avoiding*

*claimed*

*exposure*

*likelihood*

*scoffed*

Dr. Ronald Eccles said cold weather makes us more \_\_\_\_\_ to illness: "Chilling causes a constriction in the blood \_\_\_\_\_ in the nose, and this reduces our resistance to \_\_\_\_\_ within the nose." Dr. Eccles and his fellow researchers studied 180 test volunteers, who were split into two groups. Half of the volunteers immersed their bare feet in \_\_\_\_\_ of icy water for 20 minutes, while the others kept their feet dry. The researchers discovered that the volunteers who \_\_\_\_\_ their feet into cold water were more susceptible to catching a cold. About 29 percent of them developed cold-like \_\_\_\_\_ within five days, compared with only nine percent for those who kept their \_\_\_\_\_ on. Dr. Eccles said: "Mothers can now be confident in their advice to children to \_\_\_\_\_ up well in winter."

*plunged*

*infections*

*bowls*

*socks*

*prone*

*wrap*

*symptoms*

*vessels*

## **LISTENING**

Listen and fill in the spaces.

### **Keep warm to avoid colds: scientists**

For years people have claimed it to be an \_\_\_\_\_ tale that inclement weather could bring on a cold, but now scientists have found that wrapping up warm does help prevent colds. Scientists \_\_\_\_\_ for years at the notion of cold weather bringing on the \_\_\_\_\_, but researchers from the Common Cold Center at Cardiff University in the U.K will report this week that a major cause of the common cold is simple \_\_\_\_\_ to cold weather. The center is the world's only facility \_\_\_\_\_ to researching and testing new medicines for the treatment of influenza and colds. The researchers suggest that keeping one's feet and nose warm reduces the \_\_\_\_\_ of catching a cold. They further recommend that the best \_\_\_\_\_ for avoiding a cold are to wear a warm hat and keep your feet dry.

Dr. Ronald Eccles said cold weather makes us more \_\_\_\_\_ to illness: "Chilling causes a \_\_\_\_\_ in the blood vessels in the nose, and this reduces our resistance to \_\_\_\_\_ within the nose." Dr. Eccles and his fellow researchers studied 180 test volunteers, who were split into two groups. Half of the volunteers \_\_\_\_\_ their bare feet in bowls of icy water for 20 minutes, while the others kept their feet dry. The researchers discovered that the volunteers who plunged their feet into cold water were more \_\_\_\_\_ to catching a cold. About 29 percent of them developed cold-like symptoms within five days, \_\_\_\_\_ only nine percent for those who kept their socks on. Dr. Eccles said: "Mothers can now be confident in their advice to children to \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ well in winter."

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'cold' and 'weather'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. STUDENT "COLDS" SURVEY:** In pairs / groups, write down questions about colds, cold weather and our health.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

**6. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| • inclement   | • prone       |
| • wrapping    | • blood       |
| • scoffed     | • immersed    |
| • exposure    | • susceptible |
| • likelihood  | • socks       |
| • precautions | • confident   |

## DISCUSSION

### STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What were you told about colds when you were young?
- c. Do you think all of the health advice given to you by your mother was correct?
- d. Are you susceptible to colds?
- e. Do you prefer freezing cold or boiling hot weather?
- f. What do you think is the best way to prevent catching a cold?
- g. Why do you think there is only one research center in the world that tests new medicines for influenza and colds?
- h. Are you worried about avian bird flu?
- i. What's the worst cold you've ever had?
- j. Will you make a point of wrapping up warm from now on?

### STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you do anything to keep colds away?
- d. Do you take a lot of time off work / school from being ill?
- e. Do you think the study method mentioned in the article sufficiently proves that wrapping up warm protects against colds?
- f. Would you like to be a volunteer in such tests?
- g. When do you think scientists will discover a cure for colds and influenza?
- h. Are you ever incapacitated or bedridden when you catch a cold?
- i. What old wives' tales do you know and believe to be true?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?



## SPEAKING

**PRECAUTIONS & REMEDIES:** You are a health worker. You must find the best precautions and remedies to some common complaints and illnesses. Interview three other “health workers” in the class and make a note of their suggestions about how to prevent or cure the problems listed in the left hand column:

PROBLEM	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2	STUDENT 3
A cold			
Inability to sleep			
Hiccups (USA) Hiccoughs (UK)			
Bad breath			
B.O. (body odor)			
Tired eyes			
A hangover			
Inability to remember English vocabulary			

- Change partners and show each other your findings.
- Discuss your findings and agree on the best idea for each problem.
- Present your ideas to the rest of the class.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information on the common cold. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

**3. STAYING HEALTHY:** Make a poster explaining some simple ways of keeping healthy. Show your posters to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

**4. OLD WIVES' TALES:** Make a short list of some old wives' tales from your country. Try to explain their history. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Were your old wives' tales similar to those found by your partners?

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. T      c. F      d. F      e. F      f. T      g. T      h. F

### SYNONYM MATCH:

a. old wives' tale	popular belief
b. inclement	wintry
c. scoffed	derided
d. notion	idea
e. precautions	preventative measures
f. prone	susceptible / vulnerable
g. constriction	tightening
h. immersed	plunged
i. susceptible	vulnerable
j. symptoms	signs

### PHRASE MATCH:

a. people have claimed it to	be an old wives' tale
b. wrapping up warm	does help prevent colds
c. Scientists scoffed for years	at the notion
d. exposure	to cold weather
e. the best precautions	for avoiding a cold
f. cold weather makes us	more prone to illness
g. reduces our resistance	to infections within the nose
h. volunteers immersed their bare	feet in bowls of icy water
i. more susceptible to	catching a cold
j. their advice to children	to wrap up well in winter

### GAP FILL:

#### Keep warm to avoid colds: scientists

For years people have **claimed** it to be an old wives' tale that inclement weather could bring on a cold, but now scientists have found that **wrapping** up warm does help prevent colds. Scientists **scoffed** for years at the notion of cold weather bringing on the **chills**, but researchers from the Common Cold Center at Cardiff University in the U.K will report this week that a major cause of the common cold is simple **exposure** to cold weather. The center is the world's only facility **dedicated** to researching and testing new medicines for the treatment of influenza and colds. The researchers suggest that keeping one's feet and nose warm reduces the **likelihood** of catching a cold. They further recommend that the best precautions for **avoiding** a cold are to wear a warm hat and keep your feet dry.

Dr. Ronald Eccles said cold weather makes us more **prone** to illness: "Chilling causes a constriction in the blood **vessels** in the nose, and this reduces our resistance to **infections** within the nose." Dr. Eccles and his fellow researchers studied 180 test volunteers, who were split into two groups. Half of the volunteers immersed their bare feet in **bowls** of icy water for 20 minutes, while the others kept their feet dry. The researchers discovered that the volunteers who **plunged** their feet into cold water were more susceptible to catching a cold. About 29 percent of them developed cold-like **symptoms** within five days, compared with only nine percent for those who kept their **socks** on. Dr. Eccles said: "Mothers can now be confident in their advice to children to **wrap** up well in winter."