

New Research Reveals The Cost Of The Common Cold

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As temperatures across the UK plummet and winter sets in, the season-long fight to avoid catching a cold from sneezing colleagues and commuters begins. New research from Kantar Worldpanel reveals that the cost of the common cold can be as much as £27.53 if consumers purchase all the possible remedies from scratch.

As flu season gets underway, more and more Brits are scouring the supermarkets for products to ease their symptoms. There are people who soldier on with barely more than a box of tissues, as well as those who hibernate at home dosed up on every remedy the chemist can supply. But how much could you save by powering through with the bare minimum? Kantar Worldpanel has compared the average spend of someone who battles on with just the essentials with someone who choose to load up on medicines and comfort food, reaching for some chicken soup and a chocolate bar to get them through.

The bare necessities

Those choosing to treat their cold with minimal effort could spend as little as £2.29. Armed with nothing more than a box of tissues, a pack of lozenges and some standard painkillers, shoppers that choose to grin and bear it could add a mere couple of pounds to their bill.

Raiding the medicine cabinet

It's certainly tempting to reach for the medicine cabinet when looking to manage the effects of a cold. Cough liquids, flu sachets and decongestants are known to relieve some of the nastier symptoms, but come at an additional cost of £8.38. Using supplements such as Echinacea and vitamin C on top of the essentials could set shoppers back an additional £6.34. Throw in some lip salve and a bottle of hand sanitizer gel and the total figure rises to £19.23.

Comfort eating

Runny noses and sore throats can leave many feeling poorly and reaching for comfort food to console themselves. Quintessential home remedies such as chicken soup, orange juice and a drop of honey in herbal tea may soothe the symptoms of a cold, but if a shopper were to add all of these to their basket, they'd rack up an extra £5.50. And if they choose to treat themselves to a bar of chocolate or a tub of ice cream too, the total cost of the cold could rise to £27.53.

Lauren Feltham, strategic insight director at Kantar Worldpanel, comments: "Good health is priceless but, as our research reveals, the common cold certainly comes at a cost. Consumers are looking for products that target cold symptoms and many are willing to pay extra for more than the essentials. When we're under the weather, we want to be able to access products without hassle. To make the most of cold season, retailers must deliver solutions – be that promotions on popular products or placing home remedies alongside medicines: anything that will ease the strain on poorly shoppers."

Product Average price

Tissues	£0.54
Lozenges	£0.99
Painkillers	£0.76
Cough liquid	£3.14
Flu sachet	£2.37
Decongestant	£2.87
Echinacea	£4.10
Vitamin C	£2.24
Lip salve	£1.33
Hand sanitizer	£0.89
Chicken soup	£0.85
Orange juice	£1.23
Honey	£2.03
Herbal tea	£1.39
Chocolate	£1.16
Ice cream	£1.64
Total	£27.53