

How to tell a cold from the flu

When you wake up sneezing, coughing and feeling feverish, how do you know if you have a cold or the flu? Since cold symptoms rarely reach fevers above 101 degrees, check your temperature. Keep in mind that you are contagious during the first three days of cold symptoms, and 5 to 7 days with flu symptoms.

Cold vs. flu symptoms

Common cold

- Usually starts with a sore throat before going away after a day or two
- Includes a runny nose and congestion, followed by a cough within 4 or 5 days
- Fever is uncommon in adults, but a slight fever is possible. Children are more likely to have a fever with a cold
- Symptoms last about a week. If you're not feeling better after a week, you may have a bacterial infection that requires antibiotics

Flu virus

- Comes on quickly and is typically more severe than cold symptoms
- Includes a sore throat, fever, headache, muscle aches and soreness, congestion and a cough
- Slowly improves over 2 to 5 days. However, it's not uncommon to feel run down for a week or more.
- Complications include pneumonia, particularly in young children, older adults or people with lung or heart conditions
- Stop the spread of germs
- With either a cold or the flu, frequent handwashing and not touching your eyes, nose and mouth will help stop the spread of germs to yourself and others.

Source: WebMD.com



Questions?

We're here to help. Please call our customer service team at 877-605-3229. TTY users, please call 711.1.



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