

IS IT A COLD OR THE FLU?

Every year, one billion Americans get a cold, and millions more suffer with the flu.

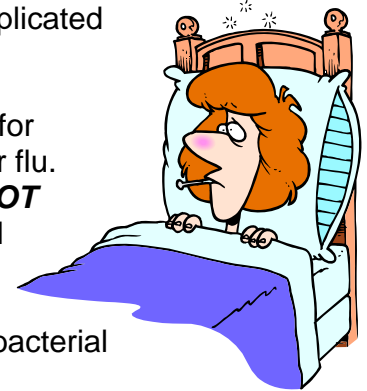
The **COMMON COLD** is caused by over 200 different viruses. A cold will develop gradually, and is most commonly spread through hand-to-hand contact with someone who has a cold, or by touching a hard surface or object that a person with a cold has recently touched.

The **FLU** is a highly contagious respiratory disease caused by viruses. It most often hits abruptly, and can be spread by sneezes, coughs and hand contact. Healthy children and adults usually recover from the flu in 7 to 10 days. People who are not healthy or have a weakened immune system can develop potentially fatal complications, the most serious being pneumonia, bronchitis and secondary bacterial infections.

TREATING THE SYMPTOMS ...

- ◆ Stay home and get plenty of rest.
- ◆ Use a pain reliever for fever, headache and muscle aches. **Never give aspirin to children.**
- ◆ Use over-the-counter medications that most closely match your symptoms. If you are taking any prescription drugs, check with your doctor or pharmacist before self medicating to avoid an accidental drug interaction.

- ◆ Drink lots of liquids to help to thin secretions, keep membranes moist and resistant to infections, and to keep the body hydrated, especially when there is a fever.
- ◆ Anti-viral drugs taken within the first 24 to 48 hours of the flu's onset can reduce the duration of uncomplicated illness.
- ◆ Don't ask your doctor for antibiotics for a cold or flu. **ANTIBIOTICS CANNOT TREAT A VIRUS**, and should not be prescribed unless you develop a secondary bacterial infection.



PREVENTION IS THE KEY ...

- ◆ Wash your hands frequently with soap and water. Don't touch your nose, eyes or mouth where germs can enter your body easily.
- ◆ Disinfect surfaces that are touched by others (someone with a cold or the flu is contagious before they have any symptoms) - telephones, computer keyboards, handrails & doorknobs.
- ◆ **GET A FLU SHOT!** Flu viruses are constantly mutating, so you need a flu shot every year.

SYMPTOM

COLD

FLU

✓ FEVER	Rare	High Fever Very Common
✓ HEADACHE	Rare	Prominent
✓ GENERAL ACHES & PAINS	Slight	Usual & Often Severe
✓ FATIGUE & WEAKNESS	Mild & Brief	Can last 2-3 weeks
✓ EXTREME EXHAUSTION	Never	Early & Prominent
✓ STUFFY NOSE	Common	Sometimes
✓ SNEEZING	Usual	Sometimes
✓ SORE THROAT	Common	Sometimes
✓ CHEST DISCOMFORT & COUGH	Mild to Moderate	Can Become Severe