Colds & Flu

Cold symptoms mostly affect you above the neck. Flu symptoms typically come on suddenly and affect the body all over. Both colds and the flu are caused by viruses.

Do I Have a Cold or the Flu?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Cold</th>
<th>Flu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fever, chills</td>
<td>Low fever, if any</td>
<td>Usual; can be high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Usual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General aches</td>
<td>Mild, if any</td>
<td>Usual; often severe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue, weakness</td>
<td>Mild, if any</td>
<td>Usual; often severe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runny, stuffy nose</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sneezing</td>
<td>Universal</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore Throat</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>Mild to moderate</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prevention:** Wash your hands often. Keep them away from your nose, eyes, and mouth. Use an instant hand sanitizer when you can’t wash your hands. Try not to touch people or their things if they have a cold or the flu. Get regular exercise. Eat well. Get enough sleep. Get a flu shot each fall at the ECU Student Health Service.

**Antibiotic Resistance:** Antibiotics treat infections caused by bacteria. You should not take antibiotics just to take them or if not recommended. Taking antibiotics unnecessarily adds to antibiotic resistance, where bacteria that normally respond to one type of medication build up a resistance and may not be effective for treatment when you need them.

Colds/Flu: What Kind of Care Do I Need?

Do 2 or more of these signs of meningitis occur at one time:
- High fever
- Stiff neck
- Nausea/vomiting
- General weakness
- Severe headache
- Purple or bumpy red skin rash
- Sensitivity to light

With the flu, do you have extreme shortness of breath, confusion, or lightheadedness?

Do you have 2 or more of these symptoms of a sinus infection?
- Fever over 101°F
- Greenish-yellow or bloody colored nasal discharge
- Nasal congestion with facial pain or pain in the upper teeth that does not improve over 7 days
- A feeling of pressure inside the head
- Eye pain, blurred vision, or changes in vision
- Cheek or upper jaw pain
- Swelling around the eyes, nose, cheeks, forehead

After a recent case of flu, are any of these signs of Reye’s Syndrome present:
- Sudden repeated vomiting
- Pain in the upper right area of the abdomen
- Rapid mental status changes (agitation, confusion, irritability, delirium)
- Increase pulse/breathing rate
- General weakness
- Loss of consciousness

With cold or flu, do you have the following:
- A fever over 100°F for more than 3 days
- A sore throat that is bright red or has white spots
- An earache
- A cough with shortness of breath; chest tightness; wheezing; chest pain; difficulty sleeping or lying down due to cough
- Nasal congestion which is not improved using self-care
SELF-CARE FOR Colds & Flu

Self-care practices will treat colds and most cases of the flu. Prescribed antiviral medicines, such as Relenza, Tamiflu, and Ramicidine may make flu symptoms milder and help you recover sooner if started within 48 hours of the onset of flu symptoms.

- Drink plenty of liquids.
- Take an over-the-counter medicine for muscle aches and/or fever, but don’t take aspirin if you have flu-like symptoms.
- Use an over-the-counter nasal spray if needed. Use as directed.
- Use a vaporizer in your room.
- Take echinacea, zinc lozenges, and/or vitamin C as advised by your health care provider, when cold or flu symptoms start. Do not use echinacea or zinc lozenges long term, as they do not prevent colds and flu.
- Get plenty of rest.
- See “OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS” to see what might help treat your symptoms.

FOR AN ACCOMPANYING SORE THROAT: Gargle every few hours with a solution of 1/4 teaspoon of salt dissolved in 1/2 cup of warm water. Make sure the salt is dissolved. Drink tea with lemon (with or

Chicken Soup for the Cold?

It’s not just an old wives’ tale. Chicken soup (or vegetable broth if you are a vegetarian) can actually help clear mucous. Bon appetit!!

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS

The ECU Student Health Service pharmacy carries a wide variety of over-the-counter medications and products at a significantly reduced cost. You do not have to have an appointment to buy these. Just go to the cashier’s window, check what you want on the OTC form, and pay for your purchase.

PAIN RELIEVERS:
Aspirin: Relieves mild to moderate pain, inflammation and tenderness in joints.
Acetaminophen: Relieves mild to moderate pain. Reduces fever.
Ibuprofen: Relieves mild to moderate pain, particularly for menstrual cramps. Decreases inflammation. Helps reduce fever.
Naproxen: Relieves mild to moderate pain. Anti-inflammatory. Reduces fever. Duration of action is 8-12 hours.

COLD & FLU:
Antihistamines: Relieves itching, sneezing, teary eyes, and runny nose.
Decongestants: Helps to widen blocked nasal passages and sinuses.
Cough Expectorant: Reduces the thickness of mucus in order to help remove congestion from the chest. Can help prevent a cold or flu from getting worse to the point of bronchitis.
Cough Suppressant: Designed to help control coughing, particularly a dry, hacking, persistent cough.
Analgesic & Antipyretic: Reduces sinus pain, headache, and/or fever.

Stop by the ECU Student Health Service to check out what is available for you! Talk to the pharmacist about possible side effects and drug interactions.

Read labels. Make sure your OTC is right for the symptoms you have.

The ECU Student Health Service pharmacy offers these non-prescription contraceptive/safer sex options:
- Latex male condoms
- Polynutrate male condoms
- Flavored condoms
- Spermicides (Prescription contraceptive methods are also available.)