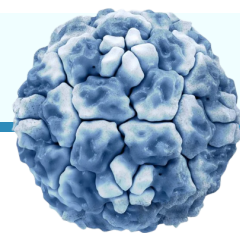


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The Common Cold



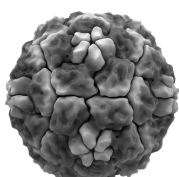
WHAT IS THE COMMON COLD?

The Common Cold is a contagious infection of the nose and throat, and it can be caused by one of more than 200 viruses.

Many viruses can cause the common cold.

Rhinovirus is the most common cause of the common cold, accounting for 10 to 40 percent of colds. Other common cold viruses include coronavirus and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

Having the common cold is unpleasant, but the infections are minor. Typically, a cold will last for 7-10 days; however, in children, the elderly, those with asthma or other respiratory conditions, and those in poor health or with compromised immune systems (i.e. individuals undergoing treatment for cancer, on immunosuppressants, etc.), the common cold may last longer.



When is the Cold Season?

The cold season typically lasts from September to May of each year (same as the Flu season); however, colds can be contracted at any time of the year.

Every year in the United States adults have (on average) 2-6 colds, and children have 6-8. There are over 1 billion cases of common cold every single year.



Common Cold Facts:

- The Common Cold and Rhinoviruses are **HIGHLY** contagious.
- The Common Cold spreads by respiratory secretions, such as saliva and mucus, when an infected person talks, coughs or sneezes. These tiny droplets travel through the air and can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby, and can be inhaled. These droplets can also land on hard surfaces, and a person then gets the Common Cold by touching the contaminated surface, before then touching their own nose, mouth, rubbing their eyes, or even if they have a small cut on their hand.
- Common Colds and Rhinoviruses are frequently associated with exacerbations of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- Treatment for the Common Cold is supportive, using over-the-counter (OTC) medications. Antibiotics **do not help the common cold.**
- In rare cases, if a more serious illness develops, your healthcare provider may need to prescribe additional medications. Call your healthcare provider if you develop a high fever, experience wheezing, or a flare-up of any of your health conditions.
- Symptoms of the Common Cold include sore or scratchy throat, runny nose, coughing, sneezing, headaches, weakened sense of taste and smell, and body aches.
- The Common Cold is **NOT** the Flu. Common language from people saying "they have the Flu" often is incorrect. The Flu is a much more serious illness than the Common Cold.

References

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3215607/>
and
<https://www.lung.org/lung-health-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/facts-about-the-common-cold>



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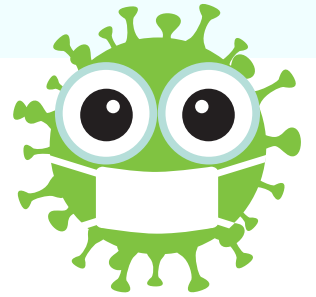
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Difference in Symptoms between the Common Cold, the Flu, COVID-19, and R.S.V.

Which Illness Do You Have?



• RARELY •• SOMETIMES ••• OFTEN

Symptoms	Cold	Flu	Covid-19	R.S.V.
Cough	•••	•••	•••	•••
Difficulty breathing	•	•	•••	••
Fatigue	••	•••	•••	•
Fever	•	•••	••	••
Headaches	••	•••	•••	••
Muscle pain or body aches	••	•••	••	•
New loss of taste or smell*	•	•	••	•
Runny or stuffy nose	•••	••	••	•••
Sneezing	•••	••	••	••
Sore throat	•••	••	•••	•
Vomiting or diarrhea	•	••	••	•
Wheezing	•	•	•	•••

* A stuffy nose may temporarily decrease the ability to taste or smell but it does not cause a sudden, complete loss of these senses. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Contagious Time Frames

- **Common Cold:** A few days before symptoms appear and for up to 2 weeks after symptoms appear. Contagious until all symptoms are gone.
- **COVID-19:** See CDC guidance at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/duration-isolation.html>
- **Flu:** Most contagious 3-4 days after illness begins, and 1 day before signs of illness show. However, infants and people with weakened immune systems may be contagious for longer than seven days.
- **RSV:** Most contagious 3-8 days after illness begins, and a day or two before signs of illness show. Some infants and people with weakened immune systems may be contagious even after they stop showing symptoms, for as long as 4 weeks.

References

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/13/well/covid-flu-rsv-symptoms.html>
and
[CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/)



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