



## Is it a cold? Or the flu?

It's hard to tell the difference. So use the chart below to figure out what's making you sick.

### Talk to your doctor if you're worried

A cold and the flu can have similar symptoms. Your doctor can help you fight the right kind of infection. Especially if it's severe.

### And stay home when you're sick

This helps stop viruses from spreading.

Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Fever	Rare	Usual; high (100°F to 102°F, occasionally higher, especially in young children); lasts 3 to 4 days.
Headache	Rare	Common
Aches and pains	Slight	Usual; often severe
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual; can last up to 2 to 3 weeks
Exhaustion	Never	Usual; at the beginning of the illness
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Chest pain, cough	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common; can become severe
Treatment	Antihistamines, decongestants, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs	Antiviral drugs – see your doctor
Prevention	Wash your hands often with soap and water; avoid close contact with anyone with a cold.	Yearly vaccination; antiviral drugs – see your doctor
Complications	Sinus congestion, middle ear infection, asthma	Bronchitis, pneumonia; can worsen chronic conditions; can be life-threatening. Complications more likely in the elderly, those with chronic conditions, young children and pregnant women.



Source: National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, <http://www.niaid.nih.gov/topics/flu/documents/sick.pdf>

This information is intended for educational purposes only, and should not be interpreted as medical advice. Please consult your physician for advice about changes that may affect your health.