

# KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COLD AND THE FLU

Not every infectious disease, such as a cold or the flu, can be treated by your health care provider. By knowing the various symptoms and home treatment solutions, you can avoid unnecessary visits to the doctor. You'll

also be able to identify conditions that need medical attention. *(Please refer to the following chart that describes symptoms, home treatment options and when to see your physician.)*

	INFLUENZA (including H1N1)	COLDS	STREP THROAT	RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)
SYMPTOMS	<p>A sudden onset of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever lasting 3-4 days about 102–104°</li> <li>• General aches and pains are extremely common and often severe</li> <li>• Fatigue and weakness can last up to 2–3 weeks, periodically resulting in extreme exhaustion</li> <li>• Cough, sore throat, chills, runny nose and headache are not uncommon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Runny nose, red eyes, sneezing, sore throat, sinus congestion, dry cough, wet cough without wheezing or rapid breathing, low-grade temperature, headache, general body aches</li> <li>• Gradual onset</li> <li>• A cold usually lasts about 1–2 weeks</li> <li>• One symptom usually precedes the others, while coughing and sore throat may persist after others have disappeared</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever, headache and throat pain (young children may complain of stomach pain rather than throat pain)</li> <li>• Swollen glands in the neck</li> <li>• Bright red tonsils that may have white spots on them</li> <li>• Some people develop a rash</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stuffy or runny nose</li> <li>• High fever (can be low-grade over age 3)</li> <li>• Severe cough and/or wheezing*</li> <li>• Shortness of breath or very fast rate of breathing*</li> <li>• Bluish color of the lips or fingernails*</li> <li>• Lethargy, irritability or listlessness*</li> <li>• Lack of appetite/poor feeding</li> <li>• Apnea*</li> <li>• Sore throat (typical from age 3–adult)</li> <li>• Headache</li> </ul> <p>*typical for infants less than age 3</p>
HOME TREATMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plug in a cool mist vaporizer or take a hot, steamy shower</li> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids. Dehydration drives your fever higher</li> <li>• Go to bed earlier than usual. This reduces stress and helps fight the infection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of liquids. Warm fluids will help relieve congestion</li> <li>• Use disposable tissues — reduces spread of virus.</li> <li>• Petroleum jelly helps a sore nose</li> <li>• Use nasal decongestant sprays for only three days or less. Longer use may actually increase irritation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not attempt home treatment if you suspect you or someone you love may have strep throat. Contact your physician immediately</li> <li>• Complete all prescribed medications in full</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drink plenty of fluids</li> <li>• Use a cool mist vaporizer</li> <li>• Use saline nose drops</li> <li>• Use non-aspirin fever medicine</li> <li>• Wash hands frequently/void touching face/eyes</li> <li>• Avoid public areas during RSV outbreaks</li> <li>• Get plenty of rest</li> </ul>
WHEN TO SEE PHYSICIAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are over the age of 65 or have a history of respiratory problems or chronic diseases, such as heart disease or diabetes</li> <li>• If you develop shortness of breath, painful breathing, earaches, pain around your eyes or cheekbones or bad sore throat</li> <li>• If you seem to get better, then get worse again</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If signs of pneumonia, bronchitis or other upper respiratory complications develop: increased coughing, difficulty breathing, high fever, ear pain, facial pain or chest pain</li> <li>• If symptoms persist beyond the typical duration of a cold (one or two weeks)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your child has symptoms of strep throat, especially if someone in your family or at your child's school has recently had a strep infection</li> <li>• When you or your child develop any of the symptoms associated with strep throat (see above)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your child has moderate difficulty breathing indicated by breathing 40–60 times per minute</li> <li>• Tires quickly during feeding/loss of appetite</li> <li>• Uses muscles in the stomach, neck or chest when breathing or if wheezing occurs</li> <li>• Has an unusual color. Skin becomes slightly gray or lacelike purple and pale while tongue, gums and lips remain pink</li> <li>• Excessive tiredness and lack of appetite</li> <li>• If child is less than 3 months old and fever greater than 100.4°</li> <li>• If signs of dehydration appear</li> </ul>