



Your doctor
can't do much for
a cold or the flu.

Both are caused by viruses,
and few drugs work
against them.

Meanwhile, follow these
tips to feel better.

Tips to prevent Colds & Flu

- ✓ Boost your immune system: exercise, get enough sleep, eat healthy, and do not smoke.
- ✓ Wash your hands many times a day: before and after meals, after using the bathroom, after using shared telephones, keyboards, and other office machines.
Use hot water and soap. Any soap will work. It doesn't have to be "antibacterial." Scrub briskly for at least 20 seconds.
- ✓ Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer in between washings.
- ✓ Cover your cough and/or sneeze. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Throw the used tissue in the trash and wash your hands.
- ✓ Try not to touch your hands to your eyes, nose, or mouth since this is the way germs are spread.
- ✓ Get a flu shot.

Home Care for Colds & Flu

COLDS

Aches & Fever

A fever is normal and is your body's way of fighting the virus. A fever and pain can make it hard for you to rest so try one of these medications to help reduce fever and alleviate pain:

- ▶ **Ibuprofen** (eye-byoo-PROH-fin): Advil and Motrin
- ▶ **Acetaminophen** (uh-see-toh-MINH-uh-fin): Tylenol

Note: Drug stores usually have their own brand or a generic brand of most cold drugs which are often cheaper than name brands and they work the same.

Runny Nose

Put a hot, damp cloth to your face for 5-10 minutes. Follow it with a dry towel. This will help ease the pressure in your sinuses.

Try a decongestant (dee-kun-JES-tint) pill (Sudafed) to bring down swelling in your sinuses. Be sure to read the label warnings or check with your doctor. Decongestants are not safe for some people.

Nasal sprays like Afrin can help. But don't use them for more than three days in a row. If you do, you can get more swelling, bleeding, or a raw nose or throat.

Don't take antihistamines (an-tuh-HIS-tuh-meenz) like Benadryl. They dry up mucus and make it harder to get rid of it.

Sore Throat

- Suck on hard candy.
- Gargle with warm salt water.

Stuffy Nose

- Clear soups and other liquids can help break-up stuffiness.
- Drink water, juice and herbal teas. Stay away from caffeine (like coffee) and alcohol.
- Breathe in steam to help clear up a stuffed or drippy nose. Humidifiers are good but steam is better. Take a hot shower. Lean over a steaming pan of water with a towel over your head and shoulders.
- Try a salt water (saline) nasal spray.

FLU

Think you have the Flu?

Symptoms include:

Fever or chills

AND

Cough or sore throat

Additional symptoms can include:

**Runny nose, body aches, headache, tiredness,
diarrhea, or vomiting**

STAY AT HOME and away from others for at least 24 hours after there is no longer a sign of a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius) or signs of a fever (have chills, feel warm, have flushed appearance, or are sweating). This should be determined without the use of fever-reducing medications.

Most people do not need to go to the doctor or hospital unless they are severely ill or have an underlying condition.

Act Fast to Stop the Flu

Doctors now have antiviral drugs for the flu. You need to take these drugs right away – within 2 days (48 hours) of getting sick.

Call your doctor if you start getting flu symptoms or are exposed to the flu before getting a flu shot

Your doctor will decide if you should take the antiviral drugs.

Take Cold Medications Safely

READ THE LABEL

Choose medication that treat **only** the symptoms you have. Always follow what the label says to get the right dose. Make sure it is OK to take with your other medications. Check side effects.

Do not take more than one medication that has acetaminophen in it. Too much can hurt your liver.