



# IS IT A **Cold** OR THE **Flu**?

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
GENERAL ACHES, PAINS	Slight	Usual; often severe
FATIGUE, WEAKNESS	Sometimes	Usual; can last up to 2 to 3 weeks
EXTREME EXHAUSTION	Never	Usual; at the beginning of the illness
STUFFY NOSE	Common	Sometimes
SNEEZING	Usual	Sometimes
SORE THROAT	Common	Sometimes
CHEST DISCOMFORT, COUGH	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common; can become severe
<b>TREATMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Antihistamines</li> <li>▪ Decongestants</li> <li>▪ Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medicines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Antiviral medicines—see your healthcare provider</li> </ul>
<b>PREVENTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wash your hands often with soap and water</li> <li>▪ Avoid close contact with anyone who has a cold</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Annual vaccination</li> <li>▪ Antiviral medicines—see your healthcare provider</li> </ul>
<b>COMPLICATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sinus infection</li> <li>▪ Middle ear infection</li> <li>▪ Asthma</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bronchitis, pneumonia</li> <li>▪ Can worsen chronic conditions</li> <li>▪ Can be life-threatening. Complications more likely in the elderly, those with chronic conditions, young children, and pregnant women.</li> </ul>



National Institute of  
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