
FLU FACTS

Symptoms:

Fever, (usually greater than 102 F/39 C), chills, headache, muscle aches, especially of legs and lower back, soreness of joints, weakness/ extreme fatigue and cough that often makes your chest sore. It is usually not accompanied by a sore throat. Most people recover after a week although it can take as long as two or three weeks before your energy level returns.

Differences between the Cold and the Flu:

<u>SYMPTOMS</u>	<u>COLD</u>	<u>INFLUENZA</u>
Fever	Rare	Common high (101-104F)
Headache	Rare	Common
General aches/pains	Slight	Common
Fatigue, weakness	Mild	Common; can last 2-3 wks
Exhaustion	Rare	Common
Stuffy Nose	Common	Rare
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Cough	Common	Common

Prevention

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Although there is no sure way to prevent the flu, immunization in the Fall can reduce your risk, especially if you have a chronic health condition. During the peak Flu season (November- March), the following suggestions may help decrease your risk of infection:

- Wash hands often and avoid touching your face
- Use disposable tissues
- Eat a balanced diet
- Avoid prolonged contact with people who have the flu
- Keep your stress level down
- Keep room humidity moderate to high
- Get adequate rest. This along with nutritious diet will help prevent you from getting run down. When you get run down, your body cannot fight a virus

Method of spreading:

Though the virus is spread through the coughing and sneezing of infected persons, it is more commonly spread through direct hand-to hand contact. If you touch or hold the hand of an infected person who may not even have apparent symptoms and then touch your eyes and nose, you are likely to infect yourself. Also, if you touched an object, such as a telephone, shortly after an infected person touched it, and then your eyes or nose, you are likely to infect yourself. Good hand washing technique is helpful.

Treatment:

There are no antibiotics that cure a virus. Unless the flu has led to secondary bacterial infection, such as bacterial bronchitis or pneumonia, you do not need an antibiotic. (Why he exposed to the potential side effects if it's not necessary?) Your health care provider

may prescribe antiviral medications within the first 24-48 hours of symptom onset. This may help to shorten the duration or severity of symptoms (especially if you have any chronic medical problems).

The following recommendations will help to improve your symptoms. If you are allergic to any of the medications listed, substitute another product or contact your clinician for further advice/recommendations.

The Road to a Speedy Recovery:

- Take Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen for pain and fever (follow dosing guidelines)
- Take cough medicine and decongestants (Pseudophedrine for congestion; Dextromethorpan, a cough suppressant for dry coughs; and Guaifenesin, an expectorant for cough with mucus)
- Don't smoke or at least cut down
- Drink plenty of fluids, preferably clear liquids and water, to thin mucus and prevent dehydration. Hot liquids help soothe the throat, loosen secretions and relieve nasal congestion.
- Gargle with warm salt water (1 teaspoon salt/ 8oz water)
- Increase humidity by using vaporizers or taking steamy showers to decrease congestion

When to Seek Medical Care:

- If temperature remain above 100.5 or 101F/38 or 38.3C despite regular dosing of Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen for longer than 36 hours
- If fever is associated with severe headache and/ or inability to turn neck
- If unable to drink liquids, or persistent vomiting (can lead to dehydration)
- If painful breathing, wheezing or shortness of breath
- If you experience disorientation or confusion
- If cough is associated with dark yellow, green, or rust colored mucus