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**Cold, Flu, or Allergy? SIGNS**

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| **Symptoms** | **Cold** | **Flu** | **Airborne Allergy** |
| Fever | Rare | Usual, high (100-102 °F), sometimes higher, especially in young children); lasts 3-4 days | Never |
| Headache | Uncommon | Common | Uncommon |
| General Aches, Pains | Slight | Usual; often severe | Never |
| Fatigue, Weakness | Sometimes | Usual, can last up to 3 weeks | Sometimes |
| Extreme Exhaustion | Never | Usual, at the beginning of the illness | Never |
| Stuffy, Runny Nose | Common | Sometimes | Common |
| Sneezing | Usual | Sometimes | Usual |
| Sore Throat | Common | Sometimes | Sometimes |
| Cough | Common | Common, can become severe | Sometimes |
| Chest Discomfort | Mild to moderate | Common | Rare, except for those with allergic asthma |
| **Treatment** | Get plenty of rest. Stay hydrated. (Drink plenty of fluids.) Decongestants  Aspirin, acetaminophen, or ibuprofen for aches and pains | Get plenty of rest. Stay hydrated.  Aspirin, acetaminophen, or ibuprofen for aches, pains, and fever  Antiviral medicines (see your doctor) | Avoid allergens (things that you’re allergic to) Antihistamines  Nasal steroids  Decongestants |
| **Prevention** | Wash your hands often. Avoid close contact with anyone who has a cold. | Get the flu vaccine each year.  Wash your hands often. Avoid close contact with anyone who has the flu. | Avoid allergens, such as pollen, house dust mites, mold, pet dander, cockroaches. |
| **Complications** | Sinus infection middle ear infection, asthma | Bronchitis, pneumonia; can be life-threatening | Sinus infection, middle ear infection, asthma |

**Cold, Flu, or Allergy? Treatment**

Treatment depends on which you have. A health professional can help you choose the best therapy.

**Common Cold**

* Symptoms last up to 2 weeks
* Stuffy, runny nose; sore throat; cough
* Treated with rest, fluids, over-the-counter (OTC) medicines to ease symptoms

**Seasonal Flu**

* Symptoms usually last 1-2 weeks
* High fever (100-102 °F, or higher in youngsters), headache, aches and pains, weakness, exhaustion, cough, chest discomfort
* Treated with rest, fluids, OTC medicines, prescription antiviral drugs

**Airborne Allergy**

* Lasts as long as allergens (such as pollen, pet dander) are present
* Stuffy, runny nose; itchy, watery eyes
* Treated with antihistamines, decongestants, nasal steroids

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