Top of Form

**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

Bottom of Form