



Millions of cases of the common cold occur in the United States every year

An adult averages 2-3 colds per year
A child averages 8-12 colds per year

FACTS

- Most people recover from a cold in 7-10 days.
- Almost all colds are caused by viruses.
- Antibiotics are **not** effective in treating the common cold because they treat bacterial infections, not viruses.
- Vitamin C may be used to help prevent the cold but it does not decrease the duration of cold symptoms.

COUGH AND COLD BASICS

- There are many different viruses that can cause the common cold.
- The most common cause of a cold is a virus called rhinovirus.
- Viruses are easily spread by sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing.
- The common cold is **not** the same as influenza (flu).
- People who are under stress are more likely to get colds and other illnesses.
- Frequently washing your hands can reduce the chance of getting or spreading a cold and other illnesses.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Cold symptoms usually develop over 3-4 days. Some of the common signs and symptoms of a cold are:

- Sore throat; usually seen on the first day but resolves quickly
- Runny/stuffy nose with discharge that may turn green or yellow near the end of the cold
- Cough; this usually develops once runny nose and congestion are resolving
- Headache and body aches
- Mild fatigue
- Fever is rare and usually low-grade (100°F)

COUGH & COLD

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PREVENTION

- Handwashing:
 1. Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap
 2. Lather and scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds
 3. Rinse your hands well
 4. Dry your hands with clean towel or air dry
- Use hand sanitizer when soap and water isn't available.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth as this can spread germs.

MANAGING SYMPTOMS

- The best way to "treat" your cold is to manage your symptoms
- Always consult with your doctor or pharmacist before starting any over-the-counter products or herbal supplements.
- Acetaminophen can be used to soothe throat pain.
- Antihistamines can reduce a runny nose or watery eyes.
- Decongestants can help decrease sinus pressure.

WHEN TO SEE YOUR DOCTOR

- If your cold/cough lasts longer than 10 days.
- You cough up blood.
- If you have trouble breathing or have chest pain.
- If your fever does not go away.
 - A fever for an adult is a temperature greater than 100.4°F.
- You can't keep down food and or liquid.

OPTIMIZE YOUR HEALING

- Stay hydrated:
 - Drink at least 8 large glasses of water per day
 - Avoid drinking soda, coffee and alcohol as this can make dehydration worse
- Get plenty of rest to give your body time to heal.
- Use an air humidifier to help loosen congestion.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using over-the-counter cold medications.

SORE THROAT

A sore throat can be a painful nuisance but some home remedies may be helpful.

- A saltwater gargle:
 - Dissolve 1/4-1/2 teaspoonful of salt in 8 ounces of warm water
- Warm tea or lemon water
- Sucking on ice chips can help soothe pain and help keep you hydrated
- Sugar free cough drops can help soothe pain



EMI Health and Veridicus Health care about your health and well-being. If you have healthcare questions, contact our team of registered nurses, mental health professionals, clinical pharmacists, and wellness coaches.

Please contact us at 1-855-586-2568.

We are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. MT.

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References available upon request