

# COLDS & FLU

## Cold or Flu?

### Cold coming on?

You may be sneezing, have a scratchy throat, runny nose, congestion and coughing.

### Flu got you?

You may feel "knocked off your feet" with body aches, fever, unusual fatigue, a headache or a bad cough.

**Note:** Stomach upset is not a common flu symptom. What is often called the stomach flu is more likely gastroenteritis, caused by another virus, food poisoning or poor diet.



## When to Call Your Health Care Provider

- Symptoms worsen or persist
- If after feeling a little better, you develop signs of a more serious problem: nausea, vomiting, high fever, shaking chills, chest pain, or coughing accompanied by a thick, yellow-green mucous



**C**olds and influenza (flu) germs scatter when people cough or sneeze. Tiny infected droplets land on people or on surfaces such as doorknobs, tabletops, desks and keyboards. The germs then enter your system when you touch your nose, eyes or mouth. **THE GOOD NEWS:** Healthy habits can reduce illness and sick days.

## STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

- **Avoid** close contact with others if you're sick.
- **Wash** your hands frequently with warm, soapy water. When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers work.
- **Cover** your mouth and nose with a tissue or handkerchief when coughing or sneezing.
- **Dispose** of your tissues immediately after you use them.
- **Keep** cool air circulating and surfaces dry.
- **Frequently** disinfect keyboards and other shared equipment.



## Over-the-counter Symptom Solutions

SYMPTOM	SOLUTION
Stuffy nose	Nasal decongestant
Coughing	Cough suppressant
Dry, hacking cough	Expectorant*
Fever, headaches, minor aches and pains	Pain reliever (analgesic)

*\*Use a humidifier, also called a vaporizer, to moisten your air passages. It can ease a nagging cough and help you breathe better, especially when you're trying to sleep.*

## FLU SHOT OR NOT

### YES

- People age 65 and older
- Nursing home patients
- Children 6-23 months
- People who smoke, have heart disease or other chronic health conditions
- People who spend a lot of time with young children, the elderly or the public

### MAYBE NOT, TALK TO YOUR PROVIDER FIRST

- People with certain allergies, especially to eggs
- People fighting fever or illness such as pneumonia
- Pregnant women

The flu shot is most often administered mid-October through mid-November for protection during the winter.