Cold and Flu

Is It a Cold or Flu?
WebMD Public Information from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPTOM</th>
<th>COLD</th>
<th>FLU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>Low grade</td>
<td>last 3-4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Prominent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aches/pains</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Usual; often severe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue/weakness</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>Can last 2-3 wks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme exhaustion</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>Early &amp; prominent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuffy nose</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sneezing</td>
<td>Usual</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough/ Chest Discomfort</td>
<td>Mild - moderate</td>
<td>Mild - severe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Self Care

- **Get plenty of rest.** If possible, stay home and rest during the first 24 hours.
- **Don’t smoke.** If you are unable to stop altogether, at least cut back on the amount you smoke. Smoking irritates the nasal passages and increases chances of pneumonia or bronchitis.
- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Fruit juices are a good source of Vitamin C. Hot liquids and juices help soothe the throat, loosen secretions, and relieve nasal congestion. Drink 2 to 3 times what you usually do.
- **Gargle with warm salt water.** Gargling mechanically breaks down and dilutes the concentration of the bacteria in the throat, and reduces swelling in the throat. Use one teaspoon of salt in a large glass of warm water every four hours.
- **Eat and drink sensibly.** You need not “starve a cold”. Eat normal healthy meals. Avoid fried or highly spiced foods or anything that is difficult to digest.

Medication

Medication that you can buy without a doctor’s visit (over the counter drugs) may make you feel more comfortable. Choose the medication that you need for a particular symptom rather than a “cold pill” that combines several drugs. Read and follow instructions on medication carefully. Do not mix medication with alcohol.

- **Fever, aches and pains.** Aspirin or Tylenol (acetaminophen) may be taken to ease aches and pains
and lower fever.

- **Congestion.** Use a decongestant such as Sudafed (pseudoephedrine) rather than an antihistamine. Antihistamines are more effective for allergy symptoms.
- **Cough with phlegm.** Use a cough syrup with an expectorant such as Robitussin DM to help bring up mucus and secretions.
- **Dry, hacking cough.** Use a cough syrup with a cough suppressant, such as Robitussin DM (dextromethorphan).
- **Runny nose.** Use a mild antihistamine, (Chlortrimeton, Dimetane).
- **Sore Throat.** Throat lozenges may give temporary relief and can be carried with you.

### Prevention

- Wash your hands
- Use disposable tissues
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Don’t smoke
- Reduce alcohol consumption
- Exercise regularly
- Relax
- Eat fresh vegetables, fruit and yogurt

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Santa Barbara City College  
Student Health Services  
721 Cliff Drive, Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
SS-170 • 956-0581 ext. 2298  
www.sbcc.edu/healthservices