

NEWS FROM THE NURSE; COLD VS FLU

Flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses but they are caused by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have similar symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. In general, flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms are more intense. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalization. Flu can have very serious complications.

The symptoms of flu can include fever or feeling feverish/chills, cough, sore throat, stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue. Cold symptoms are usually milder than the symptoms of flu. Special tests that usually must be done within the first few days of illness can tell if the person has the flu. Medication may be prescribed to lessen the intensity and duration of the flu.

The 2017-2018 flu season was the deadliest in years. With flu season right around the corner, it is crucial to take early action and be armed with information and preventative measures in order to protect yourself and those around you from the flu.

VACCINATE- The CDC recommends giving the flu vaccine by the end of October. The flu vaccine contains “inactive” viruses and cannot transmit the infection. (You can’t get the flu from the shot).

WASH YOUR HANDS frequently- regularly disinfect phones, keyboards and door handles.

STAY HOME from school and work for at least 24 hours after your fever subsides, without the use of fever reducing medicine. You may be

able to infect others from a day before to seven days after developing symptoms.

PRACTICE GOOD “RESPIRATORY HYGIENE”...cough in your elbow, rest, hydrate and see your doctor if you become very sick.

Please review the chart below. I will be sending out flu updates when they are available from the Bergen County Health Department and the CDC.



Cold Versus Flu

Questions & Answers

What is the difference between a cold and flu?

Flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses but they are caused by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have similar symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. In general, flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms are more common and intense. Colds are usually milder than flu. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations. Flu can have very serious associated complications.

How can you tell the difference between a cold and the flu?

Because colds and flu share many symptoms, it can be difficult (or even impossible) to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. Special tests that usually must be done within the first few days of illness can tell if a person has the flu.

What are the symptoms of the flu versus the symptoms of a cold?

The symptoms of flu can include fever or feeling feverish/chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue (tiredness). Cold symptoms are usually milder than the symptoms of flu. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems.

Is it a cold or flu?



| Signs and Symptoms | Influenza | Cold |
|-------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Symptom onset | Abrupt | Gradual |
| Fever | Usual | Rare |
| Aches | Usual | Slight |
| Chills | Fairly common | Uncommon |
| Fatigue, weakness | Usual | Sometimes |
| Sneezing | Sometimes | Common |
| Stuffy nose | Sometimes | Common |
| Sore throat | Sometimes | Common |
| Chest discomfort, cough | Common | Mild to moderate |