

Colds versus Flu: How to Tell the Difference

Are you coming down with a cold? Do you have the flu?
Look below to see some differences and similarities between colds and flu.

Differences Between Colds and the Flu	
WITH A COLD:	WITH THE FLU:
Symptoms are usually less severe than flu symptoms	Symptoms are usually more severe than cold symptoms
Symptoms develop gradually over a few days.	Symptoms come on quickly and severely.
You rarely have a fever.	You almost always have a fever.
You feel sick mostly in your head and nose.	Your entire body feels sick.
Body aches, headaches and pain are usually mild if you have them.	Body aches, headaches and pain are common and can be severe.
You may or may not feel tired and weak.	Tiredness and weakness are common.
There is no vaccine to protect you.	You can get vaccine to protect yourself.
Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations.	The flu can result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations.
Similarities Between Colds and the Flu	
WITH A COLD:	WITH THE FLU:
Caused by a virus.	Caused by a virus.
Affects the body's breathing system (nose, throat, windpipe and lungs).	Affects the body's breathing system (nose, throat, windpipe and lungs).
Usually goes away on its own.	Usually goes away on its own.
You should contact your doctor if symptoms change or get worse.	You should contact your doctor if symptoms change or get worse. There are antiviral medicines, by prescription, to treat the flu.