



» Cold and Flu

SYMPTOMS

The common cold syndrome is caused by one of many viruses. Symptoms of colds often include: sore throat, sneezing, cough, thick yellow mucous, stuffy nose and ears, sinus pressure around eyes, forehead and cheeks, headache and/or mild fever.

DURATION

Your body's immune system usually clears up a viral infection within 7-21 days, but no two viruses are the same and each needs individual treatment based on your symptoms.

GENERAL SELF-TREATMENT TIPS



Increase your fluid intake.



Breathe warm steam to decrease nasal stuffiness.



Sleep 6-8 hours per night and rest between classes.



Use nasal saline for sinus pain and pressure.



Gargle with warm salt water to ease sore throat.



Avoid vigorous physical activity.



Use humidified air for dry cough.



Avoid alcohol, drugs, smoke and tobacco.

WHEN TO SEE A MEDICAL PROVIDER

- + If your symptoms are severe or include difficulty breathing, wheezing, chest pain, severe headache not responding to medication, persistent sore throat or fever for more than 2 days.
- + If symptoms are worsening after 7-10 days of supportive care.
- + If you have chronic medical conditions or are on immunosuppressant medication, you may need an appointment earlier than others.

ABSENCES

If you are too sick to go to class, contact your professors directly. If you miss several classes, you should call the health center for advice on if an appointment is needed. The health center does not provide notes for isolated absences.

OVER-THE-COUNTER (OTC) MEDICATIONS FOR SELF-TREATMENT

Viruses cannot be killed by antibiotics; therefore, antibiotics are not prescribed to treat the common cold.

Use the chart below to learn how to treat common cold symptoms:

SYMPTOMS	SAMPLE BRAND NAMES	GENERIC NAME	DRUG CLASS	POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS
Runny nose and sneezing	Benadryl®, Claritin®, Zyrtec®	Diphenhydramine, Chlorpheniramine, Doxylamine, Loratadine, Cetirizine	Antihistamines	Drowsiness, makes mucous thicker
Sinus pressure and nose/ear congestion	Sudafed®, Contac-D®	Pseudoephedrine, Phenylephrine	Decongestants	Insomnia, increased blood pressure
Body aches, fever, sore throat and/or headache	Tylenol®, Advil®, Motrin®, Aleve®	Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Naproxen	Pain reliever and antipyretic	Ibuprofen and Naproxen: risk for stomach ulcer, bleeding if prolonged use
Common cold symptoms	Cold-Eeze®	Zinc lozenges	Throat lozenges	Stomach irritation
Mild sore throat pain	Chloraseptic® spray/lozenge	Phenol	Throat spray	Short-term relief
Frequent cough	Robitussin DM®	Dextromethorphan	Cough suppressants	Nausea, drowsiness, restlessness, dizziness
Congestion and thick mucous/phlegm	Mucinex®, Robitussin®, Tussin®	Guaifenesin	Expectorant	Nausea, stomach upset, dry mouth; take with food and water
Nasal, sinus or ear congestion (caused by virus or allergies)	Flonase®, Nasacort AQ®, Nasarel®, Rhinocort®, Beconase®, Nasonex®	Fluticasone, Mometasone, Budesonide, Triamcinolone, Flunisolide, Beclomethasone	Nasal steroid spray	Nasal irritation, dryness, minor nosebleed

Please note that many cold products like Nyquil® and Dayquil® have combinations of antihistamines, NSAIDs, decongestants and cough suppressants. If you are affected by only one symptom, choose a single-ingredient medication for relief of that symptom.

PREVENTION

No matter how busy you are, taking care of your body will help keep your immune system strong and prevent illness.



Wash your hands frequently.



Avoid alcohol, drugs and tobacco.



Keep your hands away from your face.



Get the recommended amount of sleep.



Avoid contact with other people who are ill.



Eat a well-balanced diet with Vitamin C.



When you sneeze, cover your nose and mouth with your sleeve or tissue — **NOT** your hands.



Drink plenty of fluids.



Clean and disinfect frequently used surfaces like phones, doorknobs and faucets.