

# UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTION GOT YOU FEELING DOWN?

Types of Infections:	Symptoms:	What to Expect:	Call 811, visit a clinic, or go to an Urgent Primary Care Centre if:
<p><b>Cold</b> Colds are a common illness caused by many different viruses.</p> <p>Symptoms usually come on over the course of a couple of days.</p>	<p>Runny nose Sneezing Sore throat Cough Headache Body aches Red Eyes</p>	<p>There's no cure for colds and antibiotics are not appropriate. Colds usually last 1-2 weeks. As the cold gets worse, your nose may get stuffy with thicker mucus.</p> <p>You can catch a cold at any time of year, but they are more common in late winter and early spring.</p>	<p>You seem to be getting much sicker. You have new or worse trouble breathing. You have a new or higher fever. You have a new rash. You have a new symptom, such as a sore throat, an earache, or sinus pain. You cough more deeply or more often, especially if you notice more mucus or a change in the colour of your mucus.</p>
<p><b>Flu</b> Influenza (flu) is a viral infection. Flu symptoms are usually come on suddenly, are worse than a cold and last longer.</p> <p>The flu is not related to diarrhea or vomiting.</p>	<p>Fever Cough Shaking chills Body aches Headache Feeling very tired</p>	<p>The symptoms usually are the worst for the first three or four days. In most healthy people, the flu will go away in 7-10 days, but it can take 1-2 weeks to get completely better.</p> <p>The flu usually occurs during the late fall and winter.</p> <p>Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent the flu.</p>	<p>You have an extremely high fever. Your fever lasts longer than 3 days. Your cough lasts more than 7 to 10 days after other symptoms are gone. You are coughing up yellow, green, rust-coloured, or bloody mucus. You are finding it harder and harder to breathe. Wheezing develops. New pain develops or pain narrows to one area, such as an ear, the throat, the chest, or the sinuses. Symptoms don't go away, even with home treatment. Symptoms become more severe or frequent.</p>
<p><b>COVID-19</b> COVID-19 is a respiratory disease caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2.</p>	<p>Fever or chills Cough Loss of sense of smell/taste Difficulty breathing Sore throat Loss of appetite Runny nose Sneezing Extreme fatigue/tiredness Headache Body aches Nausea or vomiting Diarrhea</p>	<p>Most people who get COVID-19 will experience mild to moderate illness and can safely manage their symptoms with home treatment.</p> <p>Some people are more likely to become seriously ill from COVID-19 and require medical attention.</p> <p>Vaccination is the most effective way to prevent serious outcomes.</p>	<p>If your symptoms worsen or if you do not improve after five or six days, call 811, your family doctor or go to an Urgent and Primary Care Centre (UPCC).</p>

## I'm sick. Now what?

1. Take a COVID Rapid test.
2. [If you have COVID](#), make sure to self-isolate as per BCCDC recommendations. Treat yourself at home.
3. If you don't have COVID, stay home if you are feeling sick. Treat yourself at home. Take additional COVID rapid tests as needed.
4. If you are not sure how to treat yourself at home, visit [HealthLinkBC.ca](https://www.healthlinkbc.ca) or call 811 to talk to a nurse for more advice. You may also talk to your local pharmacist for advice about medications.
5. Learn what symptoms indicate the need to seek medical attention. If you need to seek medical attention, you can make an appointment with the Student Wellness Clinic, or visit a walk-in clinic or Urgent Primary Care Centre.
6. If it is an emergency, call 911 or go to the emergency department.

**Note:** The Student Wellness Clinic does not provide sick notes. If you are too ill to attend class, you should contact your instructor immediately and submit a [Student Declaration of Absence Due to Illness or Injury form](#).

Professors should accept this. Contact Student Wellness if there are any concerns.

### Using medicines safely

You can buy medications to manage symptoms at your local pharmacy; they do not require a prescription. You may decide to try a cough, cold, or allergy medicine for your symptoms, or use Tylenol or Advil to treat aches and pains.

Be safe with medicines. Read the labels. Be sure medications are safe to take with any prescription medications you are taking. Talk to the pharmacist if you have any questions.

Note: antibiotics are not used to treat viral infections.

### How can you care for yourself?

- Get extra rest. Slow down just a little from your usual routine. You don't need to stay in bed, but try not to expose others when you are sick (i.e., don't attend gatherings or wear a mask until you feel better). Be sure to self-isolate if you have COVID-19.
- Drink plenty of fluids. This can help soothe a sore throat and thin the mucus in your nose and lungs. Hot fluids (e.g., hot water, tea, or soup) help relieve a stuffy nose and head.
- Use a humidifier in your bedroom and take hot showers to relieve a stuffy nose and head. Saline drops may also help thick or dried mucus to drain.
- If you feel mucus in the back of your throat (post-nasal drip), gargle with warm water. This will help make your throat feel better.
- Do sinus rinsing daily (e.g., NeilMed sinus rinses, available at most pharmacies).
- Use paper tissues, not handkerchiefs. This will help keep your cold from spreading.
- If your nose gets red and raw, put a dab of petroleum jelly on the sore area.

**WASH YOUR HAND TO REDUCE THE SPREAD.  
STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK.  
GET VACCINATED.**

### Go to emergency room or call 911 if you:

- find it hard to breathe
- have chest pain
- can't drink anything
- feel very sick
- feel confused
- have a severe headache
- have a stiff neck
- have trouble staying awake