Treating the Common Cold

Colds go away on their own. Your immune system is the best medicine for a cold. To support your body to respond to illness you need good nutrition, plenty of fluids, and adequate rest. Antibiotics do not shorten the course of the cold or cure the cold. Here are some things you can do to relieve symptoms or to boost your immune response. Talk to our pharmacists about which of these is best for you and for your budget.

Fever and aches
- Soup, bed rest, liquids. Don’t run the engine on empty. Try to eat something. Drink lots of fluids.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol), 325mg, two every 4 to 6 hours. Do not exceed 3,000mg a day
- Ibuprofen, 200mg, two every 6 to 8 hours. Take with food.

Congestion
- Soups, teas, hot liquids, hot showers – anything that moistens and loosens secretions.
- Neti Pot (Nasal Irrigations) – ask for handout. Supplies at the pharmacy.
- Decongestants: Oral decongestants may disrupt sleep. Used as nose spray for more than 4 days these can cause rebound congestion.
- Combination decongestant/antihistamines: expensive. May either make you tired or disrupt your sleep. Often also contain acetaminophen. Be careful not to take too much acetaminophen.

Cough
- Soup, teas (Breathe Easy tea), lozenges, hot liquids
- Honey—the most effective available treatment for cough.
- Dextromethorphan—an over the counter cough suppressant. Two teaspoons every six
- Wild Cherry Bark Cough Syrup – Woody, earthy flavor but effective.
- Codeine Cough Syrups – no better than dextromethorphan, more side effects and more expensive.

Sore Throat
- Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen for relief of pain.
- Hot or very cold liquids (Throat Coat tea).
- Lozenges
- Salt Water Gargles (1/2 teaspoon salt in 8 ounces of water)
- Slippery Elm or Honey Loquat Drops

For boosting Immune response

Talk with the pharmacist about which is best for you and your budget. Used correctly they can shorten duration and severity of colds and flu. Some work best only if started at first sign of a cold. Talk to the pharmacist or your provider about how to use these products.
- Elderberry Tincture
- Counter Attack
- Zinc/Elderberry Lozenges
- Gypsy Cold Care Tea
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPTOM</th>
<th>COLD</th>
<th>FLU</th>
<th>ALLERGIES</th>
<th>STREP Throat</th>
<th>MONO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ONSET</td>
<td>Gradual</td>
<td>Abrupt</td>
<td>Flares and Remits</td>
<td>Fairly rapid</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEVER</td>
<td>Low Grade or None</td>
<td>High Fever</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Not always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SORE THROAT</td>
<td>May start with this</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>Sometimes in the AM</td>
<td>Severe with white spots</td>
<td>Mild to very severe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NASAL CONGESTION</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUGH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Dry Cough</td>
<td>Occasionally wheezing</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEADACHE</td>
<td>Usually frontal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Frontal/Sinus HA</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACHING</td>
<td>Mild</td>
<td>Severe</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Mild to Moderate</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FATIGUE</td>
<td>Mild to Moderate</td>
<td>Severe</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate to Severe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How Long Will Cold Symptoms Last?

- Fever and sore throat generally improve within 4 DAYS.
- Cough and nasal discharge may last 2 WEEKS or MORE. (Typically, the discharge turns yellow and/or green within this 2 week period.)

Colds are caused by viruses, not bacteria. Antibiotics DO NOT work for viruses.