

COLD AND FLU SEASON:

Tips for Staying Healthy

What's the difference between a cold and the flu?

Cold symptoms usually come on gradually beginning with a sore throat followed by runny or stuffed nose, congestion and cough. A slight fever is possible. Symptoms last for about a week and during the first three days you are contagious. Rest is the best way to treat a cold. Staying well hydrated also helps. Over-the-counter supplements such as daily vitamin C (500 mg) may shorten the duration of a cold.

Flu symptoms are more severe and come on quickly. They include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may also have vomiting and diarrhea, and may not have a fever, however the most common difference between cold and flu is a higher temperature, usually in the 100-102 degree range.

Your hands carry germs.

The best way to prevent colds and flu is frequent hand washing with warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer

can be effective. Don't touch your eyes, mouth or nose with your hands without scrubbing first with soap. Wipe down germey areas on surfaces and objects you touch.

A strong body is a strong defense.

Eat healthy foods such as low-fat proteins, fruits and vegetables with nutrients. Exercise and stay hydrated by drinking a lot of water to boost your immune response.

Get a flu vaccine.

Vaccination can reduce illness, doctor visits and missed work and school, and prevent hospitalizations.

Avoid spreading germs.

Stay home while sick for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or other necessities. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze (throw it away after), and sneeze into your elbow and not your hand. Disinfect surfaces and objects you may have contaminated with your germs.

- Dr. Tony C. Wu specializes in Primary Care, Internal Medicine and General Practice at University Medicine



SPONSORED BY UNIVERSITY MEDICINE



877-771-7401

WWW.UMFMED.ORG