

## 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 <b>less severe</b> than flu symptoms   | Symptoms are usually <b>more severe</b> than cold symptoms  |
| Symptoms develop <b>gradually</b> over a few days.  | Symptoms come on <b>quickly</b> and severely.   |
| You rarely have a fever.  | You almost always have a <b>fever</b> .   |
| You feel sick mostly in your head and nose.   | Your <b>entire body</b> feels sick.   |
| Body aches, headaches and pain are usually mild if you have them.   | <b>Body aches, headaches and pain are common</b> and can be severe.   |
| You may or may not feel tired and weak.   | <b>Tiredness and weakness are common.</b>   |
| 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. |