

Cold and Flu

Is It a Cold or Flu?

WebMD Public Information from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease

| SYMPTOM | COLD | FLU |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| | | 102°-104°F |
| Fever | Low grade | lasts 3-4 days |
| Headache | Slight | Prominent |
| Aches/pains | Slight | Usual; often severe |
| Fatigue/weakness | Mild | Can last 2-3 wks |
| Extreme exhaustion | Never | Early & prominent |
| Stuffy nose | Common | Sometimes |
| Sneezing | Usual | Sometimes |
| Sore throat | Common | Sometimes |
| Cough/ Chest Discomfort. | Mild - moderate | Mild - severe |

Self Care

- **Get plenty of rest.** If possible, stay home and rest during the first 24 hours.
- **Don't smoke.** If you are unable to stop altogether, at least cut back on the amount you smoke. Smoking irritates the nasal passages and increases chances of pneumonia or bronchitis.
- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Fruit juices are a good source of Vitamin C. Hot liquids and juices help soothe the throat, loosen secretions, and relieve nasal congestion. Drink 2 to 3 times what you usually do.
- **Gargle with warm salt water.** Gargling mechanically breaks down and dilutes the concentration of the bacteria in the throat, and reduces swelling in the throat. Use one teaspoon of salt in a large glass of warm water every four hours.
- **Eat and drink sensibly.** You need not "starve a cold". Eat normal healthy meals. Avoid fried or highly spiced foods or anything that is difficult to digest.

Medication

Medication that you can buy without a doctor's visit (over the counter drugs) may make you feel more comfortable. Choose the medication that you need for a particular symptom rather than a "cold pill" that combines several drugs. Read and follow instructions on medication *carefully*. Do not mix medication with alcohol.

- **Fever, aches and pains.** Aspirin or Tylenol (acetaminophen) may be taken to ease aches and pains

and lower fever.

- **Congestion.** Use a decongestant such as Sudafed (pseudophedrine) rather than an antihistamine. Antihistamines are more effective for allergy symptoms.
- **Cough with phlegm.** Use a cough syrup with an expectorant such as Robitussin DM to help bring up mucus and secretions.
- **Dry, hacking cough.** Use a cough syrup with a cough suppressant, such as Robitussin DM (dextromethorphan).
- **Runny nose.** Use a mild antihistamine, (Chlortrimeton, Dimetane).
- **Sore Throat.** Throat lozenges may give temporary relief and can be carried with you.

Prevention

- Wash your hands
- Use disposable tissues
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Don't smoke
- Reduce alcohol consumption
- Exercise regularly
- Relax
- Eat fresh vegetables, fruit and yogurt

**Santa Barbara City College
Student Health Services
721 Cliff Drive, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
SS-170 ♦ 956-0581 ext. 2298
www.sbcc.edu/healthservices**