

Do You Have COVID-19, Influenza or a Cold?

COVID-19, Influenza, Cold

Respiratory illnesses like SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus (COVID-19), influenza (flu) and the common cold, are spread by:

- droplets released into the air by coughing or sneezing
- having unclean hands and touching your face, mouth, eyes or nose.

What To Do if You Think You Have COVID-19

COVID-19 symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. They can be similar to other illnesses such as influenza or a cold. (See the chart on the other side.)

Many people with COVID-19 have mild or few symptoms, and some may have no symptoms at all. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should get tested.

Call or message your health care provider if you think you have COVID-19.

Stop the Spread of Germs That Make You and Others Sick

- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
Throw away tissues right away.
 - Put the used tissue in the waste basket.
 - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
- Wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer often during the day. When using soap and water, scrub for at least 20 seconds. When using alcohol-based hand sanitizer, make sure it contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home if you do not feel well.
- Follow guidelines for wearing masks, self-isolation and physical distancing while you are sick.

Washing your hands is the easiest way to reduce the risk of spreading germs that cause infections.

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Wash your hands after using the bathroom, blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or before eating.

(over)

Symptoms

Symptom	COVID-19	Influenza	Cold
cough	often	often	sometimes
fever	often	often	rarely
body aches	sometimes	often	rarely
shortness of breath	sometimes	sometimes	rarely
headache	sometimes	often	sometimes
fatigue	sometimes	often	sometimes
sore throat	sometimes	sometimes	sometimes
loss of taste or smell	sometimes	rarely	rarely
diarrhea	sometimes	rarely	never
chest pain or pressure	rarely	rarely	never
runny nose	rarely	sometimes	often
sneezing	rarely	sometimes	often

Source: Minnesota Department of Health; health.mn.gov.

When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you or your child has any of the following:

- trouble breathing
- shortness of breath
- lips that turn blue or purple
- seizures
- pain or pressure in your chest or abdomen (belly)
- vomiting (throwing up) that is severe or won't stop
- influenza-like symptoms that get better but come back with a fever and bad cough
- severe dehydration (not urinating or having no tears when crying).

Symptoms Specific to Children

Call your health care provider if your child has any of the following:

- fast breathing
- bluish skin color
- not drinking enough liquids
- not waking up or interacting with anyone
- being so irritable that he or she does not want to be held
- fever with a rash.