

COLDS



What causes colds?

More than 200 different viruses cause colds.

What are the symptoms of colds?

Cold symptoms usually begin 2 to 3 days after infection and can include:

- Mucus buildup in your nose
- Nasal congestion
- Facial (sinus) pain
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Headache
- Sneezing

How does someone get a cold?

You can be infected with a cold virus by touching a surface that has cold causing germs on it, then touching your eyes or nose. You can also get a cold virus by inhaling drops of mucus full of cold causing germs.

How can a cold be prevented?

There are several ways to avoid getting a cold or passing one on to others.

- Wash hands thoroughly and often with soap and water.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle (healthy diet, adequate rest, etc.).
- Keep your hands away from eyes and nose.
- If possible, avoid close contact with people who have colds.
- Avoid other people, if possible, when you have a cold.
- Cover nose and mouth with a tissue when sneezing, or sneeze into your upper sleeve.

How can a cold be treated?

Colds are caused by viruses. Antibiotics only kill bacteria, not viruses, so antibiotics will not help you when you have a cold. There is no cure for colds, but you can get relief by:

- Drinking lots of fluids
- Getting plenty of rest
- Taking Tylenol or ibuprofen to relieve muscle aches and fever (DO NOT give aspirin to children under 12 years of age)
- Taking over-the-counter cold medicines
- Using a cool mist humidifier
- Avoiding second-hand cigarette smoke

When should a healthcare provider be called?

Call a healthcare provider if you have concerns about fever, breathing problems, chest pains, or symptoms that worsen or do not improve.