
A BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

The common cold is a contagious viral infection of the upper-respiratory tract. This includes the nose, throat, and sinuses. A cold also affects the ears and lungs. Colds are the most common disease in the world. Colds affect all ages (often infants and children) and may occur 2 to 10 times in a year in an individual.

FREQUENT SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- € Stuffy or runny nose. Nasal discharge may be watery at first, becoming thick and yellow.
- € Throat feels scratchy or sore.
- € Coughing and sneezing.
- € Loss of voice.
- € Mild headache. Watery eyes.
- € Fatigue.
- € Low-grade fever.
- € Cold symptoms start slowly. Flu symptoms are more sudden and include higher fever, major aches, chills, sweats, weakness, possible severe sore throat, cough, and chest discomfort.

CAUSES

Any of at least 200 virus strains. Virus particles spread through the air or from person-to-person contact. Colds are often spread with hand-shaking.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- € Winter (colds are most frequent in cold weather).
- € Children attending school or daycare.
- € Household member who has a cold.
- € Crowded or unclean living conditions.
- € Stress, fatigue, and allergies.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- € To prevent spreading a cold to others, avoid contact if possible during the contagious phase (first 2...4 days).
- € Wash hands often, especially after blowing your nose or before handling food.
- € Avoid crowded places when possible, especially during the winter.
- € Eat a well-balanced, healthy diet. Include plenty of citrus fruits and other sources of vitamin C.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Recovery in 7 to 14 days.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

Bacterial infections of the ears, throat, sinuses, or lungs.

B DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- € There is no cure for a cold. Self-care and time are