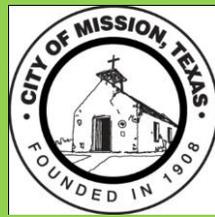


January 3, 2014



# Share the Wellness Tip

## Battling the Flu Fight and the Cold War

When you're feeling lousy, you don't always care whether you're nursing a cold or fighting the flu. You just feel sick. But not knowing should bug you—especially if you have something more serious. They sure are “catchy,” those cold and flu viruses. Although these bugs are open for business year-round, we get more infections during the fall and winter because we spend more time with others indoors.

### Different Viruses, Different Symptoms

Colds and the flu do have a lot in common. They both can cause coughing, a runny nose, sneezing, and watery eyes. But they aren't the same.

A cold usually:

- Causes symptoms two to three days after infection
- Lasts a week
- Causes headache or only a mild fever

However, the flu often:

- Comes on quickly
- Lasts as long as two to three weeks
- Raises your temperature to 100 to 102 degrees F
- Causes a headache, as well as other aches and pains

There is no medicine to cure a cold, but bed rest, drinking fluids, gargling warm salt water, and using a humidifier can help tame symptoms. If you think you might have the flu, however, don't go it alone. Talk to your doctor. If you are at high risk for complications, he or she might prescribe antiviral medicines to cut symptoms—and the amount of time you're sick.

### When It's Something More Serious

Occasionally, a cold or flu can lead to another type of lung infection, such as bacterial pneumonia. This can be mild or quite serious. See your doctor right away for treatment if you have signs of pneumonia, including a high fever, “shaking” chills, chest pain when you cough or breathe, or cold or flu symptoms that suddenly get worse.

### Stop the Spread of Germs

Help to stop the spread of germs by getting an annual flu shot, and:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Put your used tissue in the waste basket
- If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available use an alcohol-based hand rub.

Sources: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Flu.gov*

It was brave of you  
to come into work  
with the flu and  
give us all the flu.



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