

Common Cold

Symptoms: The first symptoms of a cold are often a "tickle" in the throat, a runny or stuffy nose and sneezing. Children with colds may also have a sore throat, cough, headache, mild fever, fatigue, muscle aches, and loss of appetite. The discharge from the runny nose changes from watery to thick yellow or green.

Incubation: 2 - 3 days after exposure.

Prevention of Complications: "Time cures all." That may not be always true, but in the case of the common cold, it's pretty close. During the duration of the cold, the child should avoid vigorous activity and should get plenty of rest. Plenty of extra fluids - juice, water, and carbonated beverages - should be consumed. Tylenol may be taken for control of fever and muscle aches.

School Control: Do not send your child to school if he continues to cough and/or has copious amounts of nasal discharge. The average 3-4 year old spreads disease more readily due to their inability to practice preventative care.

When to call the Doctor: A child's doctor should be called if there is increased throat pain; coughing which produces green or gray sputum or lasts more than 10 days; fever lasting several days or over 101F; or if the child has shaking chills, chest pain or shortness of breath, difficulty swallowing, poor intake of fluids, pain in the ear, unusual lethargy, enlarged, tender glands in the neck.

Is it a Cold or the Flu?

SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Fever	Rare	Characteristic, high (102-104; lasts 3-4 days)
Headache	Rare	Prominent
General aches, pains	Slight	Usual; often severe
Fatigue, weakness	Quite mild	Can last up to 2-3 weeks
Extreme exhaustion	Never	Early and prominent
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common; can become severe