

## INFORMATION ON INFLUENZA

Influenza is a viral illness, most common in the fall and winter. Persons with influenza often have fevers, body aches, headaches, runny noses and coughs. In general, persons with influenza feel quite ill and are not able to continue with normal activities.

Influenza vaccine is available to students to prevent influenza. Persons with asthma, diabetes, surgically absent spleen, conditions suppressing the immune system, mobility restrictions or other chronic medical conditions should request influenza vaccine annually in October or as soon thereafter as the vaccine is available. If you do not want to catch influenza, ask your health care provider if the vaccine is appropriate for you.

**If the following symptoms develop, you should return to the University Health and Counseling Services, preferably by appointment, call 472-1300**

- Fever over 102 degrees for more than two days.
- Cough productive of purulent green, brown, or blood-tinged sputum.
- Progressive symptoms of earache, face pain, cough or congestion over 7-10 days.
- Wheezing, shortness of breath or rapid worsening of symptoms.

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**University Health & Counseling Services**

**University Health & Counseling Services**  
www.uww.edu/uahcs  
Corner of Prairie and Starin  
Division of Student Affairs, UW-Whitewater  
262-472-1300

Health Services provides high quality and low cost services to students including, but not limited to; examinations & treatment for illnesses and minor injuries, mediations, laboratory tests and contraception.

Counseling services provides free individual, group and couples counseling to students on topics such as relationships, stress, anxiety and alcohol & drug use.

### 24-Hour Emergency help:

**911 Whitewater Rescue Squad**  
262-472-1060 **Sexual Assault Advocacy**  
262-741-3200 or 1-800-365-1587 **Crisis Line**



UHCS is **accredited** by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc. The laboratory is also CLIA accredited through COLA

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# COLD SELF CARE

Colds are non-specific upper respiratory tract infections. These include sinus, throat and lower airway symptoms. These infections are usually viral in origin. Because they are viral, they will not respond to treatment with antibiotics. Use of antibiotics to treat non-specific upper respiratory tract infections does not enhance illness resolution and will lead to increasing problems with antibiotic resistance. Your body's own natural defenses will overcome the cold in one to two weeks. To assist your body's defenses and to help relieve certain symptoms, we suggest the following:

#### **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

1. Limit physical activities to what feels comfortable.
2. Rest when you feel tired, and don't push yourself.
3. Improve hydration. Drink one glass of juice, water, soda, or other non-alcoholic beverage at least every two hours (total of 2 quarts daily). Avoid caffeine, which has diuretic action.
4. Refrain from smoking, or exposure to 2<sup>nd</sup> hand smoke.
5. Dress appropriately for the weather and cover your head when weather indicates.
6. Use a cool mist humidifier, or nasal saline to increase air moisture.
7. Wash your hands frequently to avoid spreading the infection.

#### **SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS:**

##### **Runny Nose and Sinus Congestion (Rhinosinusitis)**

1. Most cases are caused by uncomplicated viral upper respiratory infections. These acute infections generally resolve without antibiotic treatment.
2. Symptoms generally consist of nasal congestion, nasal discharge, postnasal drip, dull headache, and mild facial pain of less than 7 days duration.
3. Because most patients improve without antibiotics, symptom management is the most appropriate treatment.
4. Cold, dry weather and dry heat in buildings increase susceptibility to winter colds. Moisturizing nasal passages with nasal saline inhalations may help.
5. Antihistamines in non-prescription cold and allergy medicine may cause drowsiness.

7. If using these, make sure you follow package directions carefully. Read instructions to be sure the cold medication will not affect any medical conditions you have or interact with any other medication you are on. Check with the pharmacist or UHCS staff if in doubt.

##### **Sore Throats:**

1. May be caused by viral or bacterial (strep) infections.
2. Symptomatic treatments are helpful for both bacterial and viral sore throats.
3. Salt water gargles using ½ tsp. salt in 8 oz. (1 cup) of warm water every 3-4 hours.
4. Throat lozenges or hard candy between gargles or while in class to sooth and moisten your throat.
5. Chloraseptic or Cepastat, mild topical anesthetics, to be used as a spray or diluted for gargle.
6. Streptococcal pharyngitis is one of the few bacterial causes of sore throat. Strep may be the reason for your sore throat if you have fever, headache, swollen glands, or exudate (white patches in the back of your throat) with no other cold symptoms (e.g. cough, congestion, runny nose). You may want to have a throat culture if that is the case.

##### **Cough**

1. Can be an important defense mechanism to help clear secretions from airways.
2. Cough can also be a factor in the spread of infection (cover your mouth).
3. Acute cough of less than 3 weeks duration is frequently due to the common viral induced cold and does not improve with antibiotics.
4. Chronic cough (more than 3 weeks) may be due to postnasal drip syndrome.
5. Cough may also be symptom of hyperactive airways or asthma, which can be aggravated by respiratory infections.
6. Cough associated with high fever, shortness of breath and/or chest pain may indicate pneumonia and should be evaluated by a health care provider.
7. Viral induced cough without fever may be treated with Guaifenesin-dextromethorphan (brand name, Robitussin-DM), two teaspoons every 4 hours as needed for dry cough.

##### **General Information on colds**

There currently is no medication available to kill or stop the growth of viruses that cause the common cold. The only way to rid yourself of the common cold is to allow your body to get rid of the virus in its own way. Get plenty of rest, stay well hydrated and eat a nutritious diet. Generally your cold will resolve in 7-10 days.

1. Some studies indicate Vitamin C 1000mg daily will help you to get over a cold.
2. For fever, headaches and muscle pain, you may use aspirin or Ibuprofen, but Tylenol is recommended for viral infections and should be used if you have a history of asthma, stomach ulcers, aspirin allergy, or think you may have influenza.

##### **Good reasons for not taking antibiotics for an uncomplicated cold are:**

1. Antibiotics have no effect on viruses.
2. Your body contains both harmful and helpful bacteria. The helpful bacteria keep harmful organisms under control. Antibiotics can destroy normal bacteria and permit other illnesses and side effects to occur. Candidiasis (yeast infection) and diarrhea can be consequences of antibiotic therapy.
3. Bacteria become resistant to antibiotics after repeated exposure. They change their structure so they are less affected by the antibiotic. When an infection with the altered bacteria occurs, the antibiotic may no longer be effective in treating the infection.
4. Antibiotics sometimes cause allergic or toxic reactions, which may be harmful. There are deaths every year from penicillin allergies.
5. Unnecessary antibiotic therapy is a needless expense. Spending money for a course of antibiotics that is useless against the common cold does not make sense.