

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Diseases that are spread from one person to another by direct or indirect contact via touching contaminated objects or breathing in the air are considered to be communicable. These diseases can be transmitted from skin to skin, touching a doorknob and then rubbing your eye or nose, from handling tissues, not washing hands prior to eating, etc.

Frequently, colds, allergies and flu symptoms are confusing. The chart below may assist you in determining if you need to see a health care provider.



## GOT A COLD? FLU? SEASONAL ALLERGY?

Know the difference. Check your symptoms

<u>SYMPTOMS</u>	<u>COLD</u>	<u>FLU</u>	<u>SEASONAL ALLERGY</u>
Fever	Rare	Characteristic; high 102 to 104; last three to four days	Rare
Headache	Rare	Prominent	Common; due to sinus blockage
General Aches, pains	Slight	Usual; often severe	Very slight
Fatigue, weakness	Quite mild	Can last up to two to three weeks	Mild (From lack of sleep)
Prostration (extreme exhaustion)	Never	Early and <u>prominent</u>	Never
Stuffy Nose	Common	Sometimes	Always
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes	Always
Sore Throat	Common	Sometimes	Mild, scratchy or itchy, but not sore
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common; can become severe	Mild cough from sinus drainage
<b>COMPLICATIONS</b>	Sinus congestion or earache	Bronchitis; pneumonia, can be life threatening	Sinus congestion or earache
<b>PREVENTION</b>	NONE	Annual vaccination; Amantadine or rimantadine (anti-viral drugs)	Know what bothers you and avoid contact during the months when pollens are the highest.
<b>TREATMENT</b>	Only temporary relief of symptoms	Amantadine or rimantadine within 24 hours to 48 hours after onset of symptoms	Antihistamines; decongestants; allergy shots

Sources: National Institutes of Health\National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

### Steps to take to minimize your risk of cold and flu:

- **Wash your hands often with soap and water. Instant hand sanitizers provide are a great alternative when access to soap and water is limited..**
- **Keep your fingers away from your nose, mouth, and eyes. Avoid close contact with people who are ill, especially during the first three days of the infections, when they are most likely to spread the illness.**
- **Do not share eating utensils or drink from the same cup after someone else.**
- **Open doors and windows, when the weather permits, to allow the germs to circulate out of the house.**
- **Eat a well balanced diet and get plenty of rest. When your body is stressed, you become more susceptible to infection.**