

Choose the Right Medicines For Your Symptoms

Make sure the label says that it treats your symptoms.

If You Want to treat	Choose Medicine With:
Unclog a stuffy nose	Nasal decongestant
Quiet a cough	Cough suppressant
Loosen mucus so you can cough it up	Expectorant
Stop runny nose and sneezing	Antihistamine
Ease fever, headaches, minor aches and pains	Pain Reliever (Analgesic)

Do you have questions about colds and flu?

If you have questions about your health contact your Primary Care Provider or call MetroPlus Health Plan.



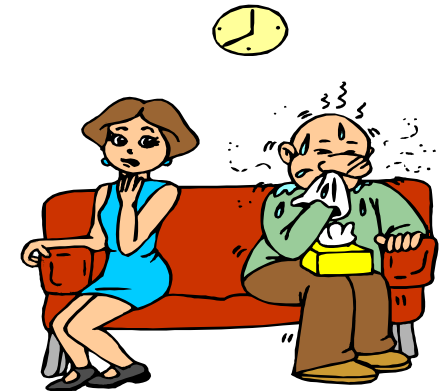
The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your Primary Care Provider. There may be variations in treatment that your Primary Care Provider may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances..

Protect Your Children From “Salicylates” In Cold Medicines

- Do **not** give aspirin or other “Salicylates” to children or teenagers with symptoms of a cold or flu.
- If you aren’t sure whether a product has Salicylates, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Young people can get sick or die from a rare condition called Reye’s syndrome if they take these medicines while they have these symptoms.

COLDS AND FLU

What to do when you have a cold or flu



MetroPlus Health Plan
 160 Water Street, New York, NY 10038
 Member information:
 1-800-303-9626
 For Information about MetroPlus Health Plan:
 1-800-475-METRO

Is it a Cold or the Flu? For Your Safety, Know the Difference!

in many ways. But the flu can sometimes lead to more serious problems, like the lung disease pneumonia.

A stuffy nose, sore throat, and sneezing are usually signs of a cold.

Tiredness, fever, headache, and major aches and pains probably mean you have the flu.

Coughing can be a sign of either a cold or the flu. But a bad cough usually points to the flu.

Know When to Call Your Doctor

You usually do not have to call your doctor right away if you have signs of a cold or flu. But you should call your doctor in these situations.

Your symptoms get worse.

Your symptoms last a long time

After feeling a little better, you develop signs of a more serious problem. Some of these signs are a sick-to-your-stomach feeling, vomiting, high fever, shaking chills, chest pain, or coughing with thick, yellow-green mucus.

How can you try to avoid getting a cold?

Wash your hands often. You can pick up cold germs easily, even when shaking someone's hand or touch doorknobs or handrails.

Avoid people with colds when possible.

If you sneeze or cough, do it into a tissue and then throw the tissue away.

Clean surfaces you touch with a germ-killing disinfectant.

Don't touch your nose, eyes or mouth. Germs can enter your body easily by these paths.

Try to avoid getting the flu

A flu shot can lower your chance of getting the flu.

The best time to get the shot is from the middle of October to the middle of November, because most people get the flu in the winter. The shot can't cause the flu. But you may feel sore or weak or have a fever for a couple of days.

Who should Get a Flu Shot?

Almost all people who want to lower their chance of coming down the flu can get a flu shot.

Flu shots are most important for:

- People 65 or older
- Nursing home patients
- People over 6 month old with health problems, like asthma, or with long term diseases. Like HIV or heat disease.
- People who are often around the elderly or those with health problems.



Who might not be able to get a flu shot?

Some people should not get a flu shot. Before you get a flu shot **talk to your doctor**. You should not get a flu shot if you:

- Have certain allergies, especially to eggs
- Have an illness, like pneumonia
- Have a high fever
- Are pregnant

Prescription Medicine Can Prevent Flu:

If you are one of those who should not get the flu shot, ask your doctor about prescription medicine to help prevent flu. And if you get the flu, taking this medicine within the first 48 hours can make your illness less serious.



Should you take antibiotics for a cold or flu?

Antibiotics won't work against cold and flu germs.

And, antibiotics should be taken only when really needed.

How can you help yourself feel better while you are sick?

A cold usually lasts only a couple of days to a week. Tiredness from the flu may continue for several weeks.

To feel better while your are sick:

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Get plenty of rest
- Use a humidifier— an electric device that puts water into the air
- Taking a cough and cold medicine you buy without a prescription may help.

