

General Advice

Hand washing with soap and water for at least 15-30 seconds covering all surfaces of the hands & fingers, rinsing well & drying thoroughly is the best way to avoid spreading infection. If hands are not visibly soiled, using an alcohol-based hand rub is also effective. Be sure cover all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry. Clean hands frequently.

Prevent the spread of the virus. Try not to sneeze or cough near others. Use paper tissues to decrease handling nasal secretions. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose as much as possible.

Symptomatic treatment is the mainstay of treatment for upper respiratory infections. Use your medication properly. Read the labels of medication(s) and follow directions closely.

Avoid using combination products to treat your symptoms. Treat symptoms individually and don't take products which contain medications for symptoms you aren't experiencing. Combination products may cause unnecessary side effects.

Antihistamines may not be helpful and have side effects such as drowsiness. The value of an antihistamine in the treatment of an upper respiratory infection remains controversial. Antihistamines are present in many cough/cold combination products.

Avoid alcohol and recreational drugs. These lower your body's resistance to infection. Rest. Resting for a day or two at 8-10 hours per day increases your ability to fight infection and prevent complications.

Antibiotics are not helpful for a cold. URIs are caused by viruses. Antibiotics fight bacteria, not viruses. Unnecessary antibiotics may lead to antibiotic resistant bacteria (often needing treatment in the hospital), allergic reactions, and/or side effects (e.g. nausea, vomiting, diarrhea).



campushealth.unc.edu | 919.966.2281
James A. Taylor Building
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Student Affairs

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UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS

guide to self-
management



Symptoms	Self-Management	Seek Medical Attention when you have...	Self Care Products Stocked at Healthy Heels Shoppe and Student Stores Pharmacy
Nasal congestion and/or nasal discharge	<p>Nasal/oral decongestant to shrink nasal passages; use nasal decongestants for 3 days or less to prevent rebound congestion.</p> <p>Don't smoke/avoid secondhand smoke.</p> <p>Drink plenty of fluids, especially water.</p> <p>Drink hot liquids and eat hot soup to loosen nasal congestion.</p> <p>Saline spray for dry nasal passages</p>	<p>Symptoms that are not improved after 10 days.</p> <p>Symptoms that are worse after 5-7 days.</p> <p>Fever that is greater than 100.4°F or 38°C</p> <p>Headache that does not go away</p> <p>Rash</p>	<p>Oral Decongestants (must be signed out)</p> <p>Pseudoephedrine (Sudafed®)</p> <p>30mg tablets, #24/box</p> <p>120mg 12-hr extended release cap/#20</p> <p>Nasal Decongestants</p> <p>Oxymetazoline nasal spray (Afrin®) use for no more than 3 days</p> <p>Saline Nasal Spray (Deep Sea®)</p>
Cough	<p>Expectorants to thin and loosen mucous for a wet cough.</p> <p>Cough suppressants for a dry, hacking cough.</p> <p>Drink plenty of water to loosen mucous</p> <p>Hard candy or cough drops (eg Halls) help quiet cough</p> <p>Don't smoke/avoid secondhand smoke</p>	<p>Cough that lasts longer than 2 weeks</p> <p>Cough that is accompanied by shortness of breath, wheezing, difficulty breathing, or chest pain</p> <p>Fever that is greater than 100.4°F or 38°C</p> <p>Rash</p>	<p>Expectorant: loosens mucous</p> <p>Guaifenesin (Robitussin®, Mucinex®)</p> <p>Cough Suppressant</p> <p>Dextromethorphan (Robitussin DM®, Delsym®)</p>
Sore throat	<p>Drink plenty of fluids to keep throat moist</p> <p>Hard candy or cough drops (eg Halls) help keep throat moist</p> <p>Use warm saline gargles every 3-4 hours (1tsp salt in 8oz warm water)</p> <p>Use lozenges, gargles, or sprays containing antiseptics and topical anesthetics every 3-4 hours for pain.</p> <p>Don't smoke/avoid secondhand smoke.</p> <p>Take an oral pain reliever.</p>	<p>Rapid onset of throat pain (overnight for example)</p> <p>Severe throat pain</p> <p>Sore throat with no other symptoms</p> <p>Neck glands that are large and tender</p> <p>Fever that is greater than 100.4°F or 38°C</p> <p>Rash</p> <p>Difficulty breathing</p>	<p>Anesthetic Spray/Lozenges</p> <p>Anesthetic Throat Spray (Chloraseptic®)</p> <p>Sore Throat Lozenges (Cepastat®)</p> <p>Oral Pain Relievers (see below for details)</p>
Fever	<p>Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration, even if you do not feel thirsty.</p> <p>Take oral pain reliever/fever reducer.</p>	<p>Fever that is greater than 100.4°F or 38°C</p> <p>Fever unresponsive to fever reducer</p> <p>Fever present for more than two-three days</p> <p>Rash</p>	<p>Oral Pain Relievers/Fever Reducers</p> <p>Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) for pain/fever. Comes in 325 or 500 mg. Can take 650-1000 mg 3 times daily. Do not exceed 4000 mg/24 hrs. Some OTC cold/flu medications contain acetaminophen.</p>
Body aches/fatigue	<p>Get plenty of rest—at least 8-10 hours of sleep with rest periods during the day.</p> <p>Take an oral pain reliever.</p>	<p>Persistent fatigue for more than 8-10 days.</p> <p>Rash</p>	<p>Ibuprofen (Advil®) - for pain/fever/inflammation</p> <p>Comes in 200mg. Can take 400-600 mg 3 times daily w/ food. Do not exceed 2400 mg/24 hrs.</p> <p>Naproxen sodium (Aleve®) - for pain/fever/inflammation. 220mg tablets - can take 220mg-440mg twice daily w/ food.</p>
Earache	<p>Take an oral pain reliever.</p>	<p>Ear pain</p>	