

**What can I do to keep from catching colds and the flu?**

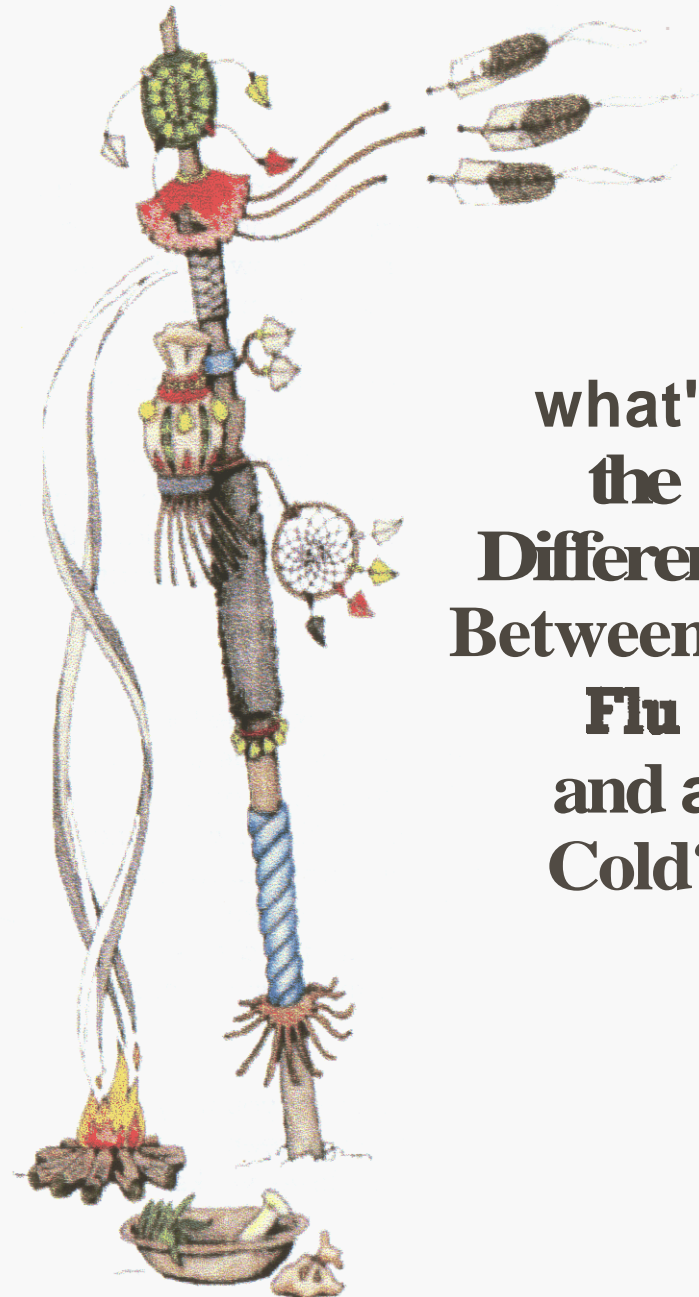
The viruses that cause colds and the flu are spread through hand-to-hand contact and through the air in droplets from sneezes and coughs. You don't catch a cold or the flu by getting wet or chilled.

- Wash your hands **often** with soap and warm water
- Avoid **rubbing** your eyes or nose.
- Use tissues **one time** and throw away.
- Possibly get the flu shot before **flu season**. (ask your doctor)

**Who should see the doctor or nurse practitioner? (because it may be something else)**

- Call us at the clinic if you have:
- A cold that lasts **for more** than 7-10 days
  - Earache or drainage **from your ear**
  - **Severe** pain in your face, forehead, neck or head.
  - Temperature above 102 degrees
  - Shortness of breath
  - **Wheezing**
  - Hoarseness, **sore throat** or a cough that won't go **away**.
  - Chest hurting when breathing in or coughing
  - **Fever** that doesn't get any better with Tylenol

# Red Lake Hospital Health Tip



## what's the Difference Between the Flu and a Cold?

This brochure provides a general overview on this topic and may not apply to everyone. To find out if this brochure applies to you and to get more information on this subject, talk to your doctor.



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**Both colds and the flu are caused by germs called viruses.**

The flu and colds are both *caused by* germs called viruses. Flu symptoms are more serious than cold symptoms. The risk for complications is much greater

**When you catch a cold...**

A cold often starts with sneezing, coughing and a *runny* nose. You may not have a fever, *or* you may run a low fever – just a degree or *two* higher than usual. You may also have muscle aches, *a* scratchy or *sore* throat, watery eyes and a headache.

**There is no cure for the cold.**

*As* the cold worsens, the drainage from your nose may turn from *thin* and watery to thick and yellow. *A* cold usually lasts *three or four* days but can last up to 10 days.

**When you catch the flu...**

The flu, which is a nickname for the influenza virus, starts suddenly and hits hard. Your fever may go as high as 105 degrees. You'll feel *weak* and *tired*, have a *dry* cough, *runny* nose, chills, muscle aches, *severe* headache, eye *pain* and a *sore* throat. The fever may last for *three* to *five* days.

**There is no cure for the flu.**

After the *flu* goes *away*, you may still feel *weak* and *tired or* keep coughing for up to *three weeks*.

**If you get the flu, there are some things you can do to feel better.**

Remember, there is no cure for a cold or the flu. *All* you can do is treat your symptoms while your body fights *off* the virus.

- *stay in Bed*
- *Drink Lots* of water.
- Use a humidifier to help ease a *dry* cough.
- Drink hot tea with lemon and honey to soothe a *sore throat* and help loosen the mucus in your nose.
- Gargle with *warm* salt water a few *times* a day to relieve a sore throat.
- Eat chicken soup to help loosen the mucus.
- Suck on cough lozenges or hard candy to *quiet* a cough.
- Stop smoking and avoid second-hand smoke, which can make a cough worse.
- Don't *drink* alcohol.
- If a child is too young to blow his or her own nose, use a suction bulb to remove the mucus.
- Use saline nose drops to help loosen mucus and moisten the tender skin in your nose.
- Take a *pain* reliever such as Tylenol.
- **Do Not** take antihistamines. They don't work against the flu and may cause



**Why aren't antibiotics help treat a cold or the flu?**

Antibiotics don't work against viruses, *so* they can't cure a cold or the flu. But, antibiotics can help if you get an infection from bacteria such as bronchitis, *strep throat*, pneumonia, a sinus infection, or an *ear* infection