



Cold & Flu Comparison Chart

<i>Signs & Symptoms</i>	<i>Colds</i>	<i>Flu</i>
LOCATION OF INFECTION	Upper respiratory	The entire respiratory system
CAUSED BY:	>200 strains of viruses (rhinovirus is the most common)	Influenza virus
ONSET:	Gradual (over a day or two)	Sudden (within a few hours)
FEVER:	Occasional	Characteristic; high (over 101F) and lasting 2-4 days
HEADACHE:	Frequent & usually less severe	Prominent and often severe
GENERAL ACHES & PAINS:	Slight	Usual and often severe
FATIGUE & WEAKNESS:	Quite mild	Can last up to 2-3 weeks
EXTREME EXHAUSTION:	Never	Early and prominent
STUFFY NOSE:	Very common	Sometimes
SORE THROAT:	Common	Sometimes
CHEST DISCOMFORT, COUGH	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common, can become severe
SEASON (viruses thrive in the cold seasons):	All year round, with peak in the winter	Most cases between November and February
DO ANTIBIOTICS HELP?:	No	No
CAN THE DOCTOR HELP?:	Only by treatments that lessen the symptoms	Yes – if treatment is started within the first 2-3 days.
RESULT IN SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEMS?:	Not Usually	Yes, pneumonia, bacterial infections and hospitalizations