

## If You Are Sick, Don't Go To...



## STAY HOME!

Stop the spread of cold and flu germs!

### How do you know if you are sick?

Symptoms include:

- fever (temperature above 100-101° F)
- chills
- body aches
- sore throat
- cough
- runny nose
- headache

Symptoms of a cold and flu are almost identical. Generally, flu is characterized by sudden onset of symptoms, fever of 101.5° F or higher, and headache and body aches that are more severe than with colds.

### Why do you get sick?

Most communicable diseases are caused by viruses and bacteria that spread easily through direct and indirect contact. Direct contact involves touching someone who is sick. Indirect contact results from coming into contact with germs a sick person has left behind. These germs can be in the air from coughs and sneezes; on eating utensils, drinking glasses, and personal items; and on doorknobs, telephones, and other contaminated surfaces.

Flu and cold germs live about 12-48 hours once they have left the human body. To avoid getting sick, wash your hands often and stand at least three feet away from someone who is ill. Staying home when you are sick greatly reduces both types of contact and protects others from your germs.

### How to Treat Colds and Flu

- Stay home and rest.
- Take pain relievers for fever and body aches. (No aspirin for children and teens.)
- Drink lots of liquids (water, clear broth, diluted juices).
- Try hot drinks to soothe a sore throat.
- Wash hands often to avoid spreading germs. Also, don't share cups or eating utensils, such as forks and spoons, with anyone.

Most people get over colds or flu within two weeks. However, if you don't get better within a couple of weeks, seek medical care. This may be a sign of infection with another virus or bacteria (called secondary infection), which may lead to complications such as pneumonia.

Seek early medical care for flu if your symptoms are severe (very high fever, trouble breathing, confusion, etc.). Your doctor may prescribe antiviral medication to treat flu. Antiviral treatment must be started within two days of becoming ill.

Visit [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu) for more information.