

Common cold (flu-like infection) in adults and children



Sneezing, coughing, sore throat, runny nose, mild fever, pain in the limbs and headache are typical signs of a common cold. A common cold, also known as flu-like infection, is often mistaken for a flu. However, the common cold develops slowly - in contrast to the flu, whose symptoms appear suddenly and with a high fever.

A common cold is usually harmless and goes away on its own after about a week. However, some discomforts (e.g. cough) can last longer. It is quite possible that you or your child will catch a common cold several times a year.

What can you do yourself if you have a cold?

- Take a rest and try to get plenty of sleep.
- Keep yourself warm.
- Drink enough liquids.
- Gargle with salt water to relieve a sore throat.
- If you have a stuffy nose, decongestant medication (such as nasal sprays) can help. Use it only for a short time (max. 1 week).
- Certain painkillers relieve pain and lower fever. Only take these if your doctor prescribes them. It is usually not necessary to take painkillers for common colds.
- Antibiotics usually don't help with common colds. The reason: Most common colds are caused by viruses. Antibiotics only help against bacterial infections. Only take antibiotics when directed by a doctor.

When to seek medical advice?

Contact your family doctor if:


- The cold symptoms do not improve or even worsen after three weeks.
- You have very severe symptoms (e.g. high temperature).
- You feel hot but you feel cold at the same time.
- Your child is under the age of one year and has symptoms of a common cold.
- You have had common colds on a regular basis.
- You have difficulty breathing.
- You have chest pain.
- You suffer from a chronic disease of the airways.

Avoid contagion!

- Wash hands regularly and thoroughly
- Cough/sneeze in the **crook of your arm** and not into your hands

Your family doctor's office has just closed?

It is usually sufficient to call during the next day's consultation hours.

Are you unsure? Call us at  1450, the health advice call centre.

More information can be found at www.wobinichrichtig.at.



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