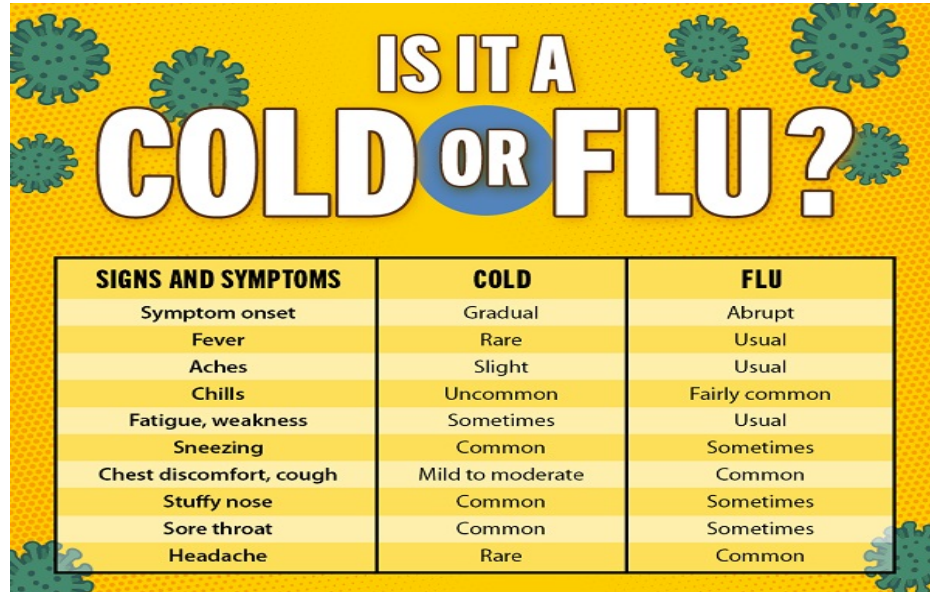


We are entering the time of year when we see influenza (flu) and other respiratory viruses at school. We want to let you know what steps we are taking to keep our school community healthy and how you can help.

Respiratory infections, such as the flu and common colds (colds), are spread when people come in close contact with sick people, inhale airborne droplets, or come in contact with contaminated surfaces. Flu and cold symptoms can sometimes be difficult to tell them apart, but consider this:



The infographic features a yellow background with green virus-like icons. The title 'IS IT A COLD OR FLU?' is prominently displayed at the top. Below the title is a table with three columns: 'SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS', 'COLD', and 'FLU'. The table lists various symptoms and compares their frequency or severity for each condition.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Symptom onset	Gradual	Abrupt
Fever	Rare	Usual
Aches	Slight	Usual
Chills	Uncommon	Fairly common
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate	Common
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Headache	Rare	Common

If symptoms persist or worsen, make an appointment with your healthcare provider to be evaluated. The flu can be serious for children of all ages, causing them to miss school, and activities or even be hospitalized.

We take the health of our students seriously and work very hard to keep these viruses from spreading. We regularly clean frequently touched areas such as door knobs, stair rails, telephones, computer keyboards, and bathroom faucets and fixtures.

You can help us maintain a healthy school environment in a variety of ways:

- Make sure your children receive all recommended immunizations, including an annual flu vaccine
- Reinforce all of the above preventive behaviors practiced at school,
- Make sure children get plenty of exercise, sleep, and healthy food, and
- Keep sick children home, especially if they have a fever above 100° F, diarrhea, vomiting, or a severe cough.

Take everyday preventative actions to stop the spread of germs:

- Wash hands often with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizers when soap and water are not available,
- Cover coughs with a disposable tissue or cough into their sleeve,
- Avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth,
- Avoid close contact with sick individuals,
- Avoid sharing cups and eating utensils, and
- Stay home when sick.

A couple of additional important points:

- Notify your child's healthcare provider if your child develops difficulty breathing or a new onset of wheezing
- If your child has asthma, please make sure we have a copy of your child's Asthma Action Plan.

Important information about preventing the flu can be found at these websites

- <https://odh.ohio.gov/know-our-programs/seasonal-influenza/prevent-the-flu>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/children.htm>

If you have any questions, please contact the school nurse, Liza Meehl RN BSN, at 330-927-7462. Together we can have a healthy school year!