

COMMON COLD



WHAT IS THE COMMON COLD?

- Colds are caused by viruses.
- Colds cannot be treated with antibiotics.
- Colds are very common; some people can have several each year.
- Most common symptoms are coughing, sneezing and a runny nose that last for a week.
- People may appear very sick, with a high fever, lack of energy, and loss of appetite.
- Occasionally, a cold can lead to complications, such as ear infections and pneumonia.

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

- Through the air, whenever a person with a cold coughs or sneezes.
- Through direct contact, whenever a person with a cold touches his or her saliva or runny nose and then touches another person.
- Through indirect contact, whenever a person with a cold touches his or her saliva or runny nose and then touches an object. Another person may then catch the cold by touching the object, because cold germs can live on objects for hours.

THINGS YOU CAN DO

- If you have a cold, wash your hands often.
- If you have children, try to wash your own hands and your child's hands after wiping his or her nose, and especially before you prepare or eat food.
- Keep in mind that colds cannot be treated with medication, so there is little your physician can offer. However, other more serious infections can start out as a cold. Contact your physician if you/your child shows any of the following signs:
 - Earache
 - Fever higher than 39 C (102 F)
 - Excessive sleepiness
 - Excessive crankiness or fussiness
 - Skin rash
 - Rapid breathing or difficulty breathing
 - Persistent coughing
- Your child may continue attending the childcare facility if feeling well enough to take part in the activities. In winter, having a cold need not restrict the child from playing outdoors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the Health Unit at 1-800-660-5853 or visit www.healthunit.org

Source: Canadian Paediatric Society

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