

Common cold

The common cold is caused by **different viruses**.
A normal healthy adult has 2 to 3 colds per year.
Symptoms of common cold are: a **sore throat** in the beginning, a **runny nose**, **nasal congestion** and **sneezing**.
A **cough** can develop at the end of the cold.



How does common cold spread?

Colds are transmitted from one person to the next through hands or touch. Some cold viruses can live on surfaces for several hours, such as a door handle or a phone.

People with colds can also cough or sneeze virus particles into the air, which is breathed by the next person to catch a cold!

Do I need a chest X-ray?

No, a chest X-ray is not helpful, and exposes you to unnecessary radiation.

Do I need antibiotics?

No, antibiotics should not be used to treat an uncomplicated common cold. Antibiotics treat bacterial, not viral infections, and can cause unwanted side effects.

How do I treat common cold?

The common cold resolves on its own without any particular treatment.

However uncomfortable symptoms can be improved: decongestants or nose drops for a runny nose, pain relievers for sore throat or headache, and paracetamol for fever.

How can I prevent spreading common cold?

Wash your hands regularly. This is easy and efficient!

Use simple water and soap and rub your hands thoroughly for 15 to 30 seconds.

Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze, with a tissue or the inside of your elbow: this prevents you from spreading virus droplets, and you will not contaminate your hands. Discard used tissues.

Disclaimer: The information in this publication is not meant to replace the advice of a health professional. If you have any questions about your health please contact a health professional.

Resources: UpToDate.com, American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)

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