

The **difference** between influenza and a cold



Influenza

Moderate to severe illness lasting 7–10 days

Usually a high fever

Shivering attacks

Muscular pains

Headache (may be severe)

Dry cough may become moist

Vomit occasionally

Can suffer severe complications (pneumonia)

Bedridden

Vaccine available

A Cold

Mild illness

Sometimes a mild fever

A runny nose

No muscular pain

Mild headache (congested sinuses)

Sometimes a cough

No Vaccine



Treating your influenza symptoms

In an uncomplicated attack of influenza, you can take the following steps to help you recover:

- Rest at home (to let the body fight the virus), until your temperature is normal and you are feeling well.
- Drink or give lots of fluids.
- Control fever, aches and pains with aspirin or paracetamol for adults, (aspirin should be avoided in children).
- See your doctor within 48 hours of onset of symptoms – your doctor can discuss antiviral medications which can shorten your illness. You will have to pay for these.
- See your doctor if your symptoms get worse. These include: increasing breathing problems, coughing up yellow or green coloured phlegm, severe headaches or dehydration.
- Always ring your doctor or practice nurse if you are worried. Help is only a phone call away.

If you are 65 years and over OR if you have an ongoing medical condition, the complications from influenza can be much more severe. See your doctor.

Immunisation is still the best protection against influenza.

Influenza key messages

Influenza is a serious illness that can affect anyone.

Influenza can be life threatening and is easily spread from person to person.

Even when you are fit and active, immunisation is still the best protection against influenza.

Vaccinate as soon as the vaccine is available because it takes up to two weeks to protect you.

You need an influenza vaccination each year.

Influenza vaccine cannot cause influenza, as it does not contain any live viruses.

Influenza vaccination is offered FREE until the end of June to those at greatest risk - if you are 65 years and over OR if you have an ongoing medical condition.

For further information speak to your doctor or practice nurse