Cold, flu symptoms differ; both can be treated at home

Cold and flu are often lumped together. However, while the symptoms are similar, there are key differences between a cold and the flu. It’s important to understand the symptoms of each so you can take the right steps to treat the condition.

The biggest difference between a cold and the flu is the severity of the problem. Typically, a cold generally means you have a headache, body aches, fever, and fatigue. You may also experience symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, and runny nose. On the other hand, flu symptoms are much more severe. These include high fever, headache, body fatigue, chills, and sore throat.

The most common symptoms associated with a cold include:
- Nasal congestion
- Sneezing
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Fever
- Fatigue

While cold symptoms can last for weeks, flu symptoms can last for months. In addition, cold symptoms usually clear up before they get worse, while flu symptoms tend to get worse before they improve.

To reduce your chances of getting sick, please note the following:
- Turn away from people when you cough or sneeze
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid unvaccinated people
- Clean surfaces you touch
- Avoid crowded places

The symptoms of viral infections such as the flu and colds are usually a result of the body's immune system attempting to fight the virus. Some symptoms, like sneezing and coughing but not fever or body aches, help to identify the type of virus in the body. A fever is the body's response to an infection — higher temperature helps kill the virus.

Cold symptoms began one to five days after initial contact with the virus and last up to seven days. Flu symptoms, however, began abruptly and lasted for at least one week. After seven days, the cold can still be present.

The best thing you can do to reduce your chances of getting sick is to stay healthy. Eat a nutritious diet, exercise regularly, and get enough rest. If you feel sick, consult a healthcare provider.

For more information about the flu and colds, please contact the CDC at 1-800-CDC-INFO.

Recipe: Aunt Dana's sinottable potatoes

Recipe by Aunt Dana.

One event I look forward to every year is when my dad's side of the family gets together during Thanksgiving. We're all so much happier when we're all together and in need of some soothing and comforting love. This is the perfect time of the year for food and family. It's a beautiful but very busy time of the year. Make sure you treat yourself. Get into the kitchen and prepare some delicious food. This is a perfect time to get together with your family and enjoy some good conversation.

Ingredients:
- 1 lb. sinottable potatoes
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup butter

Instructions:
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Cut potatoes into halves, place on a baking sheet, and bake for 45 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix together sour cream and butter.
4. Remove potatoes from oven and top with sour cream mixture.

Serve hot and enjoy!}

Colds and flu are common during the winter months. Although the symptoms are often similar, there are key differences between a cold and the flu. It’s important to understand the symptoms of each so you can take the right steps to treat the condition.

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