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**Introduction**

This newsletter provides information and how to alleviate conditions which are more frequent in the winter.

**Flu**

You can often treat the flu without seeing your GP and should begin to feel better in about a week.

**Check if you have flu**

Flu symptoms come on very quickly and can include:

- a sudden fever
- a temperature of 38C or above
- aching body
- feeling tired or exhausted
- dry, chesty cough
- sore throat
- headache
- difficulty sleeping
- loss of appetite
- diarrhoea or tummy pain
- nausea and being sick

The symptoms are similar for children, but they can also get pain in their ear and appear less active.

**Telling the difference between cold and flu**

Cold and flu symptoms are similar, but flu tends to be more severe.

Flu	Cold
Appears quickly within a few hours	Appears gradually
Affects more than just your nose and throat	Affects mainly your nose and throat
Makes you feel exhausted and too unwell to carry on as normal	Makes you feel unwell, but you're OK to carry on as normal (for example, go to work)

**How to treat flu yourself**

To help you get better more quickly:-

- rest and sleep
- keep warm
- take paracetamol or ibuprofen to lower your

- temperature and treat aches and pains
- drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration (your pee should be light yellow or clear)

**A pharmacist can help with flu**

A pharmacist can give treatment advice and recommend flu remedies. Be careful not to use flu remedies if you're taking paracetamol and ibuprofen tablets as it's easy to take more than the recommended dose. Speak to a pharmacist before giving medicines to children.

**Find a pharmacy**

If you are not close to your regular pharmacy use the web address:-

<https://beta.nhs.uk/find-a-pharmacy>

Call NHS 111 or see your GP if:-

- you're worried about your baby's or child's symptoms
- you're 65 or over
- you're pregnant
- you have a long-term medical condition; for example, diabetes or a heart, lung, kidney or neurological disease
- you have a weakened immune system; for example, because of chemotherapy or HIV
- your symptoms don't improve after 7 days

**Antibiotics**

GPs don't recommend antibiotics for flu because they won't relieve your symptoms or speed up your recovery. Antibiotics are only effective against bacterial infections and flu and colds are both caused by viruses .

**Influenza Inoculations (Flu Jabs)**

The CHC provides free flu jabs to patients who fit one or more of the categories in "Call NHS etc." above. This also applies if you receive a carer's allowance, or you are the main carer for an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if you fall ill. To make an appointment see a Receptionist or phone **01932 565655**

**There has been a national shortage of flu vaccinations for the over 65's. We are doing our best to resolve the situation and thank you for your patience during this time. Please look out for further information on the website and in the surgery.**

**Common Cold**

You can often treat a cold without seeing your GP. You should begin to feel better in about a week or two.

### Check if you have a cold

Cold symptoms come on gradually and can include:-

- blocked or runny nose
- sore throat
- headaches
- muscle aches
- coughs
- sneezing
- a raised temperature
- pressure in your ears and face
- loss of taste and smell

The symptoms are the same in adults and children but sometimes symptoms last longer in children.

How you can treat a cold yourself to help you get better more quickly:-

- rest and sleep
- keep warm
- drink plenty of water (fruit juice or squash mixed with water is ok) to avoid dehydration
- gargle with salt water to soothe a sore throat

You can buy cough and cold medicines from pharmacies or supermarkets. A pharmacist can advise you on the best medicine.

#### You can:-

- relieve a blocked nose with decongestant sprays or tablets
- ease aches or lower a temperature with painkillers like paracetamol or ibuprofen

Be careful not to use cough and cold medicines if you're taking paracetamol and ibuprofen tablets as it's easy to take more than the recommended dose.

Some are not suitable for children, babies and pregnant women.

There's little evidence that supplements (such as vitamin c, zinc, echinacea or garlic) prevent colds or speed up recovery.

#### See a GP if:-

- your symptoms don't improve after three weeks
- your symptoms get suddenly worse
- your temperature is very high or you feel hot and shivery
- you're concerned about your child's symptoms
- you're finding it hard to breathe or develop chest pain
- you have a long-term medical condition; for example, diabetes, or a heart, lung, kidney or neurological disease
- you have a weakened immune system; for example, because you're having chemotherapy

#### Antibiotics

GPs don't recommend antibiotics for flu because they won't relieve your symptoms or speed up your recovery. Antibiotics are only effective against bacterial infections and flu and colds are both caused by viruses .

### How to avoid spreading a cold

Colds are caused by viruses and easily spread to other people. You're infectious until all your symptoms have gone. This usually takes a week or two. Colds are spread by germs from coughs and sneezes which can live on hands and surfaces for 24 hours.

#### To reduce the risk of spreading a cold:-

- wash your hands often with warm water and soap
- use tissues to trap germs when you cough or sneeze
- bin used tissues as quickly as possible

#### How to prevent catching a cold

A person with a cold can start spreading it from a few days before their symptoms begin until the symptoms have finished. The best ways to avoid catching a cold are:-

- washing your hands with warm water and soap
- not sharing towels or household items (like cups) with someone who has a cold
- not touching your eyes or nose in case you've come into contact with the virus; it can infect the body this way
- staying fit and healthy

### Tobacco Smoking

Smoking may make you more susceptible to viruses because it acts as a respiratory irritant. If you are thinking of giving up ask your pharmacist or GP for information about the support they can give you.

### Emotional Wellbeing



## Always tired?

If you constantly feel tired, no matter how much rest you get, it could be related to your emotional wellbeing.

Cognitive behavioural therapy is a highly effective treatment for a range of sleep issues and is available online at:-

[www.iesohealth.com/sur](http://www.iesohealth.com/sur)

It is delivered through written conversation as you type back and forth with your therapist. The therapy is discreet, secure and available at a time and location that suits you. All you need is an internet connection.

The service is free and provided by Ieso Talking Therapy on behalf of the NHS.