

# Influenza vs. Colds vs. Pertussis

Symptom		Influenza ("Flu")	Colds (Viral URI)	Pertussis
<b>Fever</b>		Usually present & high (102-104°F or 39-40°C); typically lasts 3-4 days	Uncommon If present, typically low-grade	Uncommon If present, typically low-grade
<b>Chills</b>		Common	Uncommon	Rare
<b>Headache</b>		Very common	Uncommon	Uncommon
<b>Aches and pains, muscle aches, chest discomfort</b>		Very common Often severe	Slight to Moderate	Uncommon
<b>Fatigue and weakness</b>		Moderate - severe; can last up to 14-21 days	Mild	Mild; Patient usually appears well between coughing attacks
<b>Extreme exhaustion</b>		Very common early in illness	Extremely Rare	Rare
<b>Stuffy or runny nose</b>		Common	Very common	Common, early in the disease
<b>Sneezing</b>		Sometimes	Common	Common, early in the disease
<b>Sore throat</b>		Common	Common	Uncommon
<b>Cough</b>	Character	Non-productive ("dry") cough is typical	Hacking cough, often productive; usually responds to cough medications	Variable character; fits / paroxysms and nocturnal cough are common; generally not responsive to cough medications; "whooping" may or may not occur
	Severity	Moderate	Mild to Moderate	Variable; mild to severe; infants appear quite ill and may present with cough or apnea
	Duration	Typically 3-7 days; occasionally to 14 days	Typically 3-7 days	Persistent cough, almost always >1 week, usually 2-6 weeks, sometimes 10+ weeks
	Paroxysms (coughing fits)	Uncommon	Rare	Common; often leads to vomiting or gagging
<b>Infectious Period</b>		1 day before symptom onset and 3-7 days after	Variable; typically 4-7 days after symptom onset; can be longer	From start of catarrhal phase (before cough onset) to 21 days after cough onset* Most efficient spreading after cough onset

\*or until taking 5 days of appropriate anti-pertussis antibiotics