

# Influenza & COVID-19

The flu and COVID-19 share many characteristics, and it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. While there are still unknowns about COVID-19 and the virus that causes it, the following is information that will be of help. This information and more can be found at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

## Commonalities of signs and symptoms



Both share:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue (tiredness)
  - Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults
  - Both COVID-19 and flu can result in a number of complications, i.e. pneumonia, sepsis, respiratory failure, et al
- Sore throat
  - Runny or stuffy nose
  - Muscle pain or body aches
  - Headache



## Differences

Include:

	Flu	COVID-19
• Signs & symptoms	Mild to severe complications	Change in or loss of taste & smell; more serious complications
• Time to develop symptoms	1-4 days after infection	Typically 5 days after being infected, but symptoms can appear as early as 2 days after or as late as 14 days after infection
• Contagious period 	About 1 day before symptoms appear; most contagious during initial 3-4 days of illness	Still under investigation. It's possible to spread virus for about 2 days before experiencing signs or symptoms and at least 10 days after signs or symptoms first appeared. If someone is asymptomatic or their symptoms go away, it's possible to remain contagious for at least 10 days after
• How it spreads	Person to person up to about 6 feet away. May be able to pass to others before awareness that you're sick. Spread mainly by droplets; less often by touching a surface or object	Person to person close contact within about 6 feet. May be spread by people who are not showing symptoms. Possible to spread by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it & then touching your own mouth, nose or possibly their eyes. More contagious among certain populations and age groups than flu.
• Treatment	Prescription influenza antiviral drugs	Recommendations updated by the <a href="#">COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines Panel</a>
• Vaccines 	FDA-licensed influenza vaccines for protections against the 3 or 4 viruses that scientists anticipate will circulate each year. <b>Recommended to get vaccinated during Sept. &amp; Oct.—6 months &amp; older, including people who once had COVID-19.</b>	No vaccine as of yet, but vaccine developers and other researchers and manufacturers are expediting development of a vaccine.

# Influenza & COVID-19 cont.

## Emergency Warning Signs

People experiencing these warning signs\* should seek emergency medical care.

Flu in Children	Flu in Adults	COVID-19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast breathing or trouble breathing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trouble breathing</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bluish lips or face</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent pain or pressure in the chest</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ribs pulling in with each breath</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persistent dizziness, confusion, inability to arouse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New confusion</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chest Pain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seizures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to wake or stay awake</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe muscle pain (child refuses to walk)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not urinating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bluish lips or face</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dehydration (no urine for 8 hours, dry mouth, no tear when crying)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe muscle pain</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not alert or interacting when awake</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe weakness or unsteadiness</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seizures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fever or cough that prove but then returns or worsens</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In children less than 12 weeks, any fever</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worsening of chronic medical conditions</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worsening of chronic medical conditions</li> </ul>		

\* This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility. If COVID-19 is suspected, notify the facility representative that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. Because some of the symptoms between the two are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone, and testing may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis.

For more information and facts about the Flu vs. COVID-19, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm#table> .

Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/faq-flu-season-2020-2021.htm>

<https://www.cbs19.tv/article/news/health/coronavirus/getting-a-flu-vaccine-during-covid-19-pandemic/501-3bcdcd2f-fe09-48c8-9f7d-aa7a79e5a5b5>