



MYTHS & FACTS

ABOUT

RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES

There are several myths and misconceptions around respiratory illnesses, especially in the context of common viruses like COVID-19, the flu, and the common cold. Here are some common myths along with the corresponding facts:



Myth: You can only get a cold in winter.

FACT: While cold weather can weaken the immune system, you can catch a cold at any time of the year. The viruses that cause colds, such as rhinoviruses, are present year-round.

Myth: The flu and the common cold are the same thing.

FACT: No, they are different. The flu is caused by the influenza virus and can lead to more severe symptoms like high fever, body aches, and fatigue. The common cold is usually caused by rhinoviruses and tends to have milder symptoms like a runny nose or sore throat.

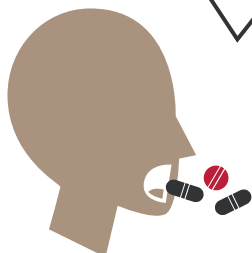


Myth: If you don't have a fever, you don't have the flu.

FACT: Not everyone with the flu develops a fever. Some people, especially those with milder cases or those who have been vaccinated, may experience other symptoms like fatigue, headache, or cough without a fever.

Myth: You can get the flu or a cold from being cold or wet.

FACT: Respiratory illnesses are caused by viruses, not by being exposed to cold weather or getting wet. However, cold weather can increase your chances of being around others in crowded spaces, which makes it easier for viruses to spread.



Myth: Antibiotics can treat the flu and cold.

FACT: Antibiotics only work against bacterial infections, not viral infections like the flu, cold, or COVID-19. Overusing antibiotics can also lead to antibiotic resistance.

Myth: If you have COVID-19, you will always have severe symptoms.

FACT: Not everyone with COVID-19 has severe symptoms. Many people, especially those who are younger and healthy, experience mild symptoms or are asymptomatic, though they can still spread the virus.

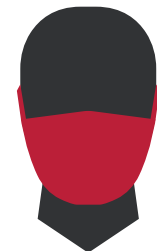


Myth: Handwashing doesn't really help prevent respiratory illnesses.

FACT: Proper handwashing is one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of respiratory viruses. It helps remove germs that can enter your body when you touch your face, especially your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Myth: Wearing a mask doesn't help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses.

FACT: Masks, particularly N95s or similar high-quality masks, can significantly reduce the transmission of respiratory illnesses like COVID-19 and the flu, especially in crowded or indoor settings.

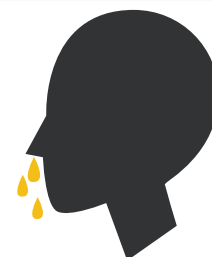


Myth: Once you've had a respiratory illness like COVID-19, you can't get it again.

FACT: While people who've had COVID-19 may have some immunity, it doesn't last forever, and reinfection can occur. New variants of viruses like COVID-19 can also evade the immune system, leading to reinfection.

Myth: If you have a mild cough or sniffle, you don't need to worry about spreading the virus.

FACT: Even mild symptoms can spread respiratory viruses. It's important to stay home if you're sick, cover your coughs and sneezes, and wash your hands regularly to reduce transmission.



Myth: If you get the flu vaccine, you can't get the flu.

FACT: While the flu vaccine significantly reduces your risk of getting the flu, it doesn't guarantee complete immunity. You may still catch the flu, but the vaccine typically reduces the severity of symptoms and the risk of complications.