

How Do I Treat A Cold?

What should I do if I have cold symptoms like sore throat, nose and sinus congestion/drainage, and some cough?

In most cases, these symptoms suggest a viral infection of your upper respiratory tract which includes your sinuses (cavities or spaces in the facial bones), your throat, and your bronchus (the main airway tube that later divides leading to each lung). Viral infections run their course in anywhere from 4-14 days, most resolve in a week. Antibiotics do not help at all when treating viral infections. Antibiotics are only effective in treating bacterial infections.

If you do not have fever or chest pains and do not feel overly sick, it is best to treat the symptoms with over the counter medicines that address your specific symptoms and get as much rest as possible so your immune system can fight off the viral infection. We recommend you come in for a doctor visit if your infection worsens after 7 days instead of seeing improvement by day 8. If you experience a rapid progression of your symptoms from a mild illness to what feels like a more serious condition, you should come in to be seen. If you thought you were getting better then suddenly got worse, that change can indicate a secondary bacterial infection, often in the sinuses, and an antibiotic may be helpful at that time.