



Paris
Community
Hospital
Family
Medical
Center

Is it a cold or the flu?

staying
healthy

February 2018

Both illnesses have similar symptoms

A fever, chills, cough, and runny nose. Could it be the flu or a common cold?

Because the flu and common cold share many symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), tests performed within the first few days of illness can determine whether a person has the flu.

Influenza (the flu) and common cold are both respiratory illnesses, but are caused by different viruses. In general, the flu is worse than a cold and the symptoms are more intense.

The Flu

This contagious illness is caused by the influenza virus. Symptoms can be mild to severe, and can even lead to death. The flu usually comes on suddenly and often involves some or all of the following symptoms:

- Fever (100 to 103 degrees Fahrenheit in adults and often higher in children)
- Cough

- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children than adults)

According to the CDC, widespread influenza activity has been reported by 46 states, which includes Illinois. Flu activity most commonly peaks in the US between December and February. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) has reported widespread flu activity in the state since December 10, 2017.

The IDPH states that most people who get the flu completely recover in one to two weeks. However, some people are more likely to experience flu complications that can result in hospitalization and sometimes death. Pneumonia, bronchitis, sinus infections, and ear infections are examples of flu-related complications. People at high risk for developing flu-related complications include children younger than five (especially those younger than two), adults 65 and older,

pregnant women, and residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.

Common Cold

Colds are usually milder than the flu. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose and sore throat. A fever and headache are rare. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations. However, complications can arise from a cold, such as sinus congestion or an earache.

In response to increasing flu activity in Illinois and across the country, the IDPH recently recommended that hospitals and other healthcare facilities enact temporary visitor restrictions until further notice. Paris Community Hospital is complying with these restrictions, which are as follows:

- Limit the number of visitors to two at a time.
- No visitors under age 18.
- Visitors to pediatric patients should be parents and grandparents only.
- Do not visit if you have a fever (100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher), sore throat, or cough.



Steven Martin,
PA-C

Steven is a certified physician assistant and manager of the EZ Care walk-in clinic, a service of

PCH/FMC.

Steven has been affiliated with PCH/FMC since 2016. In addition to his managerial duties at EZ Care, which include scheduling, compliance for the clinic, and general oversight, he provides patient care.

Steven has been a physician assistant since 2005 when he completed the physician assistant program at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. His experience includes family practice, emergency medicine, and urgent care. He is also a Major in the Indiana Air National Guard and has extensive experience as a physician assistant, flight medic, and journeyman in the US military, where he continues to serve since 1995.

Steven is a member of the American Association of Physician Assistants and Illinois Association of Physician Assistants.



Is there such thing as the stomach flu?

Though commonly mistaken for influenza (the flu), the stomach flu is not really the flu at all.

Influenza affects only the respiratory system — the nose, throat, and lungs — and is caused by the influenza virus (see article on front page). Viral gastroenteritis, often called stomach flu, is caused by bacteria, viruses, or parasites. The stomach, intestines or both become inflamed, which causes the following symptoms:

- Watery diarrhea
- Abdominal cramps and pain
- Nausea, vomiting or both
- Occasional muscle aches or headache
- Low-grade fever

According to the Mayo Clinic, the most common way to develop viral gastroenteritis is through contact with an infected person (sharing utensils, towels, or food) or by ingesting contaminated food or water. Most otherwise healthy people recover without complications. However, for infants, older adults, and people with weak immune systems, viral gastroenteritis can be fatal.

There is no effective treatment for viral gastroenteritis, so prevention is key, the Mayo Clinic states. In addition to avoiding food and water that may be contaminated, thorough and frequent hand-washing is the best defense.

A number of viruses can cause gastroenteritis. One is the norovirus, which is highly contagious and the most common cause of foodborne illness worldwide.

Another is the rotavirus, the most common cause of viral gastroenteritis in children, who are usually infected when they put their fingers or other

objects contaminated with the virus into their mouths. Adults infected with rotavirus may not have symptoms, but can still spread the illness.

In early 2017, classes were canceled for at least two days at a suburban Chicago high school due to a stomach virus that affected nearly a third of its 2,500 students. The Illinois Department of Public Health confirmed that the epidemic was caused by the norovirus.



Paris Community Hospital Family Medical Center

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staying healthy

PCH/FMC's Community Healthcare Programs February & March

Stay Strong, Live Long

Ongoing

This free exercise program for seniors takes place on Tuesdays at 10 am at the Chester P. Sutton Community Center for Seniors of Edgar County. The program helps maintain and increase overall strength to make everyday tasks easier. The program is instructed by licensed PCH Rehab staff.

Wear Red Luncheon

February 2

PCH/FMC's fifth annual Wear Red Luncheon will take place during National Wear Red Day at noon at Café France in Paris. The speaker will be Dr. Tony Nasser, cardiologist with Providence Medical Group in Terre Haute, who sees patients regularly in Paris at the Acklin Shackelford Clinic. Cost is \$20 per person. Tickets are limited. They can be purchased at the Paris Community Hospital registration desk. For more information, call 217-466-4228.

Free Adult CPR/AED Class

February 6

This free, non-healthcare provider course teaches basic CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). The class takes

place from 8 am to 1 pm in Conference Room D. To register, email Somer Nagrodski at SNagrodski@pchfmc.com or call 217-466-4320. When calling, leave your name and you will be registered.

Monthly Health Screenings

February 8; March 16

Blood sugar, blood pressure, and lipid panel (HDL, LDL, and tryglycerides) screenings will be held from 7 to 9 am. Fasting for eight hours in advance is required. The cost is \$25. To register, call 217-466-4228.

Volunteers' Chocolate Sale

March 21-22

The PCH Volunteers will hold their South Bend Chocolate Company sale from 8 am to 4 pm by the rotunda entrance to the FMC.

Doctors' Day

March 30

Join PCH/FMC as it celebrates National Doctors' Day. Be sure to thank your physician for the care that he or she provides.

Financial Assistance Available

PCH/FMC understands the financial concerns that families have due to unplanned healthcare costs. Therefore, we offer financial assistance to families who may not be able to pay for their healthcare. Call 217-465-2606, Ext. 4257.