

Kid First



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A publication of **Texas Children's Health Plan CHIP and STAR Members** ages 12-18 and their parents.

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NO TIME TO WAIT IN AN EMERGENCY ROOM (ER)?

GO TO AN URGENT CARE CENTER THAT'S CLOSE TO YOUR HOME.

Many families go to the emergency room and wait many hours. YOU don't have to be one of them. Find an Urgent Care Center that is close to your home. Skip the wait and focus on getting the care you need.

To find a doctor or Urgent Care Center near you, visit TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org.



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SAVE THE WORLD FROM COLD AND FLU SEASON!

FLU SEASON IS HERE. And December, January, and February are usually the worst months for the flu. You can help stop the spread of flu by getting the flu shot. Everyone 6 months of age and older should get the vaccine. Don't wait. Protect yourself and your family. You can get the flu shot at your doctor's office.

Did you know that more than **200,000 PEOPLE** go to the hospital for flu-like symptoms every year?

For help finding a doctor, call
1-866-959-6555 (CHIP) or
1-866-959-2555 (STAR).

IN ORDER TO SAVE THE WORLD FROM FLU SEASON,

WE NEED MORE COLD AND FLU HEROES!

Visit ColdandFluHero.org to get all of the resources you need to treat the cold and flu.



COLD OR ALLERGIES: WHICH IS IT?

Seasonal allergies and the common cold can be so much alike that it's sometimes hard to tell the 2 apart. But if you look closely, you can find clues about what's going on.

Ask yourself these questions to help figure out if you could have allergies or a cold.

	ALLERGIES	COLDS
Have the seasons changed?	Seasonal allergies come at the same time every year, like when leaves start to fall in autumn or plants start to bloom in the spring. Allergy symptoms like sneezing, congestion, or a runny nose are the body's response to breathing in allergens, like plant pollen or mold.	Colds are caused by viruses that can turn up in any setting, at any time of year, but are most common in winter months.
Did symptoms come on quickly?	If yes, it could be allergies. Another sign that you might be dealing with seasonal allergies is if symptoms come on suddenly and last a long time.	Cold symptoms come on slowly and usually go away within 7 to 10 days.
Is there a fever?	It is unlikely for a fever to be caused by allergies.	If yes, it could be a cold. Cold viruses often cause fevers.
Is there yellow or green nasal drainage?	Your runny nose would have a thin, clear discharge.	If yes, it could be a cold. Your nose would have thick yellow or greenish drainage.

If you think that you have an allergy, talk to your doctor. Contact with animals, smoke, pollen, dust, and mold are just a few of the things that can cause allergies. Removing the cause can help avoid allergy symptoms. The only way to know what someone is allergic to is with an allergy test. This can be done in your doctor's office.

If it looks like you have a cold, check with your doctor before taking any over the counter cold medicines. Use saline nose spray or drops to loosen mucus for both allergies and colds.

HOW TO TREAT YOUR COLD AT HOME

The common cold sends more kids to the doctor than any other illness. Most colds are caused by a specific type of virus found in the air and on the things you touch. Use the following tips to identify symptoms and help to treat your cold at home.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Stuffy or runny nose.
- Itchy or sore throat.
- Sneezing.
- Cough.
- Headache.
- Mild fever.
- Feeling tired.
- Loss of appetite.

WHAT TO DO

- Ease discomfort with:
 - Acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
 - A cool-mist humidifier or steamy bathroom.
 - Saline drops for the nose.
- Offer lots of fluids .

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF YOU HAVE:

- ❗ Cold symptoms that get worse or last more than a week.
- ❗ A barking cough or a cough that is severe and occurs in spasms.
- ❗ Difficulty breathing.
- ❗ A high fever.
- ❗ A sore throat that makes eating and drinking difficult.
- ❗ A bad headache.

HONEY ELIXIR RECIPE

Don't let cold and flu season get you down. Stock up on this home remedy to relieve symptoms that accompany the cold and flu. It's even delicious when you're feeling great!

WHAT YOU NEED:

- A tall glass or your favorite mug
- Boiling water
- 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon dried ginger or 1 inch fresh ginger grated
- 1 tablespoon honey

DIRECTIONS:

1. Boil water.
2. Squeeze the juice of lemon into your hands to catch the seeds and let juice go into glass or mug.
3. Add dried ginger. If using fresh ginger, cut the peel of an inch of ginger and grate it into cup.
4. Add honey.
5. Add water. Sip until done.

Honey should not be fed to kids younger than 1 year old.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM GERMS!

Most germs and viruses are spread through the air in sneezes, coughs, or even breaths. Some pass from person to person by touching something that is contaminated, like shaking hands with someone who has a cold and then touching your own nose.

WASHING YOUR HANDS WELL AND OFTEN is the best way to defeat these viruses.

Wash your hands every time you:

- Cough or sneeze.
- Eat or prepare foods.
- Use the bathroom.
- Touch animals and pets.

Always use warm water and soap and rub your hands together for at least 15 seconds, about the amount of time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday to You."

COVER YOUR NOSE AND MOUTH when you sneeze and cover your mouth when you cough to keep from spreading germs. So if you have to cough, it is best to do it in your elbow so you are not contaminating your hands.

Another way to fight and prevent infections is to make sure you **GET ALL THE ROUTINE IMMUNIZATIONS**, like flu shots, from your doctor. These help keep your immune system strong and prepared to battle germs.

You can also keep your immune system strong and healthy by **EATING WELL, EXERCISING REGULARLY, AND GETTING GOOD SLEEP**. All this will help you to be prepared to fight germs that cause illness.

