

## What Causes a Cold?

A cold (upper respiratory infection) is caused by a virus. These viruses include, but are not limited to rhinovirus, coronaviruses, RSV (respiratory syncytial virus), and influenza. These viruses spread from person to person through droplets (coughing/sneezing).

## Common Symptoms

*(treat at home)*

Runny nose, cough, chest/nasal congestion, sneezing, sore throat, headache, fever (100.4F or greater), fatigue, body aches, chills.

## When To Get Urgent Medical Help

**(To Get Help ASAP, call 911)**

Shortness of breath, chest pain/pressure, severe weakness, confusion/change in mental state, fever 103+F (101+F if immunosuppressed).

## Home Care Tips

- Rest
- Stay hydrated: *helps thin/break up mucus*
- Warm Fluids: *Soup/broth, tea with lemon/honey if no allergy*
- Saline drops for nasal congestion
- Saltwater gargles: *½ tsp salt w/ 8oz warm water, do not eat or drink anything 15-20 minutes after gargle.*
- Vaseline/Petroleum Jelly at nasal openings to protect from irritation
- Over the Counter Medications
  - See Pharmacy Info

## Testing Options

Not everyone with cold symptoms needs viral testing. If symptoms do not respond to home care/OTC medications, contact the clinic at (<https://my.mhsgenesis.health.mil> or 580-481-5230)

## Quarters

If you are sick, stay home and contact your supervisor. The first 24 hours of quarters can be given by your flight commander or supervisor. If you feel you need additional time, contact the clinic for evaluation. Additional quarters will be given on a case-by-case basis at nurse/provider discretion.

## Return to Work

- No fever for 24 hours without fever reducing medication (acetaminophen, ibuprofen)
- AND**
- Overall symptoms improving

## How to Prevent Spreading a Cold to Others

- Stay home if you are sick
- Frequent hand washing/hygiene
- Social distancing and/or wear a mask around others for 5 days after returning to normal activity

## Pharmacy Information

Altus AFB Pharmacy Contacts  
Call: 580-481-5257/8  
Text: 833-268-6651

**Meds available through OTC program**  
**\* Approved for SFS/Flyers**

Medication	Age	Use
*Tylenol 325mg TAB #50	>6 yrs	Pain/Fever
*Advil 200mg TAB #50	>12 yrs	Pain/Fever
Benadryl 25mg TABS #24	>6 yrs	Allergies
Zyrtec 10mg TABS #30	>6 yrs	Allergies
*Allegra 180mg TABS #30	>12 yrs	Allergies
Sudogest 30mg TABS #24	>12 yrs	Allergies
Mucinex 600mg TABS #20	>12 yrs	Congestion
Mucinex-D TABS #20	>12 yrs	Congestion
Mucinex DM TABS #20	>12 yrs	Congestion
Delsym 12HR 30mg/mL #90 MI	>4 yrs	Sore Throat
Cepacol Lozenge #16	>6 yrs	Sore Throat
Cepacol+Cough Lozenge #16	>5 yrs	Sore Throat
Imodium 2mg CAPS #12 <i>Take 2 CAPS by mouth followed by 1 CAP after each loose stool; max 8 CAPS/day</i>	>12 yrs	Diarrhea
Docusate & Senna #100	>6 yrs	Constipation
Pepto-Bismol Chew Tabs	>12 yrs	Diarrhea/GI
Benzonatate 100mg #30 <i>Take 2 CAPS 3x/day as needed for cough**</i>	>10 yrs	Cough

Contact the pharmacy for questions about these medications.

## When to See a Provider

- Symptoms are worse after 7 days
- Symptoms have not resolved in 10 days
- Fever is present and does not improve with medication

## Sick Call for Flyers/SFS

Hours: 7:45-8:15 a.m.

- **Open for:** New injuries or concerns
- **DO NOT USE FOR:** Cold or GI symptoms (please call Warfighter Clinic for proper triage)

## Options for other Active Duty/Beneficiaries

- Same-day appointments may be available for new injuries or concerns
- Please call Clinic if having cold or GI symptoms for proper triage

## Flyer Information

DNIF required if:

- Unable to clear ears
- Symptoms require unapproved medication use (Mucinex, Dayquil, etc.)
- Overall fatigue

Return to Fly Hours:

7:45-8:15 a.m. or 1-1:30 p.m. when clinic is open

## Fun Facts

Cold viruses use their numbers to evade immunity.

More than 200 viruses can cause colds. Your body cannot build immunity to every one of these viruses, which is why you can get recurrent colds. This is also why scientists have not been able to make a vaccine to prevent the common cold.

### Healthy habits are the best defense against colds.

Cold viruses spread through sneeze and cough droplets. Some things you can do to avoid these germs are to wash your hands often with soap and water; keep your distance from others who have a cold; and avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

### Soup really can help you feel better.

Getting plenty of fluids can help ease cold symptoms. Breathing in the steam from hot water—or a bowl of soup—may help with congestion. The steam from a warm shower could also help.

### Over-the-counter medicines cannot cure colds.

The only way to cure a cold is to give it time to run its course. OTC products, like cold or pain medicines, may ease symptoms, but they will not help you get over your cold faster. Also, keep in mind that antibiotics will not help your cold because those only work against bacterial infections, not viruses.

### Most colds start to clear up after a week.

Cold symptoms, such as sneezing, coughing, sore throat, and a stuffy or runny nose, usually start to get better in 7-10 days. But some cold symptoms, like a cough, can last for up to 3-4 weeks. You should check with a doctor if your cold symptoms last more than 10 days. Symptoms that last this long may be due to conditions other than colds, like sinus infections or allergies.

## Sick with a Cold?



### Helpful Information for

Causes	Symptoms
Treatment	Testing
Quarters	Return to Work
Prevention	Pharmacy Info
Sick Call	Flyer Information

### Address:

301 N. 1st St., Bldg. 46

Altus AFB, OK 73523

<https://altus.tricare.mil/>

<https://my.mhsgenesis.health.mil/>

<https://tricare-bene.triwest.com/signin>

- **Hours:** Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
- **Warfighter Clinic:** 580-481-5230
- **Family Health:** 580-481-7082
- **Pharmacy Text Line:** 833-268-6651 - text "get in line" for medications
- **Pharmacy Refill Line:** 580-481-5257  
**Pharmacy Web Refill:**  
<https://cxmlink.com/DHAMTF8492>
- **Military Health System Nurse Advice Line (Recommended for use after hours):**  
800-874-2273, Option 1

*Closed all federal holidays, and second and fourth Thursday of every month, 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., for Readiness Training (Subject to Change)*