



# Protect Our Patients

**In an effort to protect you, our patients, we are following the Centers for Disease and Control (CDC) guidelines to reduce the risk of the spread of flu-like illness to other patients and visitors.**

**We ask your cooperation regarding the following guidelines:**

All patients with flu-like symptoms including cough, sore throat, fever, runny nose will be directed to a separate waiting area and will be seen in the flu treatment area.

All patients with flu-like symptoms will be asked to wear a mask as soon as they arrive.

To minimize exposure, there will be no visitors permitted in the flu treatment area with the patient. One parent or guardian may accompany a minor.

Good hand washing is important to reduce the spread of flu and colds.



**MOUNT NITTANY**  
MEDICAL CENTER





# Self Care for Colds, Flu, and other Viral Infections

Colds and most flus are caused by viruses. They can't be cured with antibiotics. However, you can relieve symptoms and support your body's efforts to heal itself. No matter which symptoms you have, be sure to drink plenty of fluids (water or clear soup); stop smoking and drinking alcohol; and get plenty of rest.

**Increase fluids.** Drinking more fluids will help you stay hydrated and better control your temperature. Take frequent sips of clear liquids. Fluids such as water, sports drinks and clear broth and soups are usually well tolerated. Do not drink beverages with a lot of sugar in them, such as juices and sodas. These can make diarrhea worse. As your appetite returns, you can resume your normal diet.

**Wash your hands often.** Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers or soap and water hand wash after coughing, sneezing, and wiping your nose to reduce the spread of germs.

**Stay home and away from others.** Stay away from others until at least 24 hours after fever has stopped without the use of fever-reducing medications.

**Treat fever, chills, and body aches.** Use non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication, like ibuprofen or naproxen. Consider taking acetaminophen, instead, for fever and pain if you have an upset stomach. Never give aspirin to a child under age 18 who has a cold or flu. (It could cause a rare but serious condition called Reye's syndrome.)

**For stuffy nose and congestion:** Breathe steam to open blocked nasal passages. Stand in a hot shower or use a vaporizer. Be careful not to get burned by the steam. Saline nasal sprays and decongestant tablets help open a stuffy nose. Dry up a runny nose or postnasal drip with antihistamines.

**For runny nose, sneezing, and cough:** Antihistamines may help with a runny nose and sneezing. Talk with a Pharmacist about which product may be right for you. If coughing is a problem, take an expectorant to loosen mucus. If you have a dry cough, use a cough suppressant.

**For sore throat or nasal congestion:** Gargle every 2 hours with 1/4 teaspoon of salt dissolved in 1/2 cup of warm water. Suck on throat lozenges, cough drops, or hard candy to moisten your throat.

## When to Call Your Physician

Call your physician if you have any of the following symptoms or if you aren't feeling better after 7 days:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Worsening symptoms, especially after a period of improvement
- Fever of 100.4°F or higher, or fever that doesn't go down with medication
- Sudden dizziness or confusion
- Severe or continued vomiting
- Difficulty swallowing fluids
- Signs of dehydration, including extreme thirst, dark urine, infrequent urination, dry mouth
- Spotted, red, or very sore throat