

## Is it a cold or the flu?

The cold and flu can both cause similar symptoms. Check your symptoms with the chart below and find out which infection you might have.

Symptom	Cold	Flu
<b>Fever</b>	Rare	Usual, high fever (39°C to 40°C) with sudden onset, lasting three to four days
<b>Headache</b>	Rare	Usual, can be sudden
<b>General aches and pains</b>	Generally mild	Usual, often severe
<b>Fatigue (tiredness)</b>	Generally mild	Usual, severe, may last 2 to 3 weeks
<b>Runny, stuffy nose</b>	Common	Common
<b>Sneezing</b>	Common	Sometimes
<b>Sore throat</b>	Common	Common
<b>Nausea and vomiting</b>	None	Uncommon but can occur, especially in children
<b>Diarrhea</b>	None	Uncommon but can occur, especially in children
<b>Chest discomfort, cough</b>	Sometimes, mild	Usual, can be severe to moderate Cough may last for weeks
<b>Complications</b>	Can lead to sinus congestion or earache	Can lead to pneumonia and respiratory failure; worsen a chronic condition, or be life-threatening

## Public Health Clinics



Call for information about clinic hours and locations:  
**1-800-922-0096**



# STAYING HEALTHY

reducing your risk of catching and spreading infections



**St. Thomas Site**  
1230 Talbot St.  
St. Thomas, ON  
N5P 1G9  
☎ 519-631-9900  
☎ 1-800-922-0096

**Woodstock Site**  
410 Buller St.  
Woodstock, ON  
N4S 4N2  
☎ 519-421-9901  
☎ 1-800-922-0096

[www.swpublichealth.ca](http://www.swpublichealth.ca)



## What are germs?

“Germ” is a general term for many types of tiny organisms. Two types of germs are: bacteria and viruses. Bacteria live almost everywhere in our environment, but only 50 are known to cause infections in humans. Viruses cause far more infections than bacteria and spread more easily. If more than one person in your family has an illness, chances are it’s a viral infection.

## How are germs spread?

Germs can live on hard surfaces for up to 48 hours. Most people get sick when they touch something contaminated with germs and then touch their eyes, nose or mouth. In fact, hands spread 80% of infections, including the common cold and flu. The best way to prevent the spread of germs is by washing your hands often.



## Six steps to stop the spread of germs

### 1. Wash your hands

- Wash your hands often using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Remember to wash your hands thoroughly before and after using the washroom; before and after handling food; after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose; after shaking hands; and before touching your face
- Hand washing should last for at least 15 seconds

### 2. Cover coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue away and wash your hands
- If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve – not your hands!

### 3. Get your flu shot annually

- Family doctors, pharmacies and Public Health Units offer free immunizations

### 4. Don't share personal items

- Don't share objects that have been in other people's mouths, including toothbrushes, water bottles, cigarettes, etc.

### 5. Stay home when you are sick

- Stay home until you no longer have a fever and are feeling well for one full day

### 6. Clean frequently touched items and surfaces

- Keep common surfaces and items such as door knobs, phones, light switches and remotes clean and disinfected

