



U.S. Department of Health
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Administration for Children
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Office of Family Assistance

www.fatherhood.gov

NRFC Take Time Tips for Dads

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WINTER WELLNESS

Colds and flu can bring a halt to wintertime activities with your children. But dads can take several simple steps to help keep the family fun going all winter long.

Prevention: Stop Colds and Flu Before They Start

- **Encourage frequent hand washing and set a good example.** If your children see you washing your hands often, they likely will too. Step in at the sink to help the littlest ones wash thoroughly. Be sure to dry your hands completely after washing them.
- **Cover coughs and sneezes.** Show your children how to turn their heads away from others and use and dispose of tissues properly.
- **Exercise, eat healthy food, and get enough sleep.** When the body is in good physical shape, is well rested, and has proper nutrition, it is better able to fight off germs and infections.
- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Fruit juices can supplement your child's vitamin C intake, but be cautious about the sugar content of many juices.
- **Take advantage of the flu vaccine.** Ask your doctor or health department whether you or your children might benefit from a seasonal flu vaccine.

Sniffles and Sneezes...Is It the Flu?

Five simple questions to help you decide if your symptoms might be from the flu rather than from a common winter cold.

1. **How quickly did my symptoms appear?** People with the flu can get sick rapidly. Influenza symptoms usually develop over a few hours as opposed to over 1–2 days with the common cold.
2. **How high is my temperature?** Colds can be associated with fever, but usually a low grade fever. However, influenza often causes a high fever. If you or your child has a high fever, call your doctor. Your doctor will know if influenza has been in your community and can ask you other important questions to better identify and treat your illness.
3. **Do I feel tired?** Influenza often causes extreme fatigue. With a cold, people can feel tired or run down, but with the flu they often feel “wiped out.”
4. **Do I have muscle aches?** Along with high fever and a sudden onset of symptoms, moderate to severe muscle aches are a common symptom of influenza.
5. **Do I have a cough in addition to other cold symptoms such as a runny or stuffy nose?** Both the common cold and influenza can cause a cough, nasal congestion, and a runny nose. However, for many people, the cough from the flu is more significant.

If you have questions about your health or your child's health, call your doctor. Getting information is key to staying healthy. To learn more about the flu, what you can do to prevent it, what might help you feel better if you have the flu, and what are the warning signs of complications from the flu, visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Web site www.cdc.gov.

Take Time to Be a Dad Today