

# ABOUT RESPIRATORY ILLNESS

## SYMPTOMS



Fever



Cough



Sore Throat



Runny Nose



Shortness of Breath



Muscle Aches



Fatigue



Vomiting / Diarrhea



Abdominal Pain

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS



Stay home until you are fever-free (without using fever-reducing medication) **AND** your symptoms have been improving for 24 hours (48 hours for vomiting/diarrhea).



Avoid non-essential mask-less activities for 10 days from when your symptoms started. If you can't stay home, wear a well-fitting mask.



If you have symptoms of a respiratory illness **DON'T VISIT** those at high risk of severe illness including those that live in long-term care, retirement homes or in hospital.

## REDUCE THE SPREAD



Wash your hands often and avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.



Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.



Keep your vaccinations up to date including getting your annual flu vaccine and any COVID-19 boosters/doses you are eligible for.



Disinfect high-touch surfaces in your home and workplace.

Wear a mask:

- To protect yourself from viral respiratory illnesses.
- To protect others at higher risk of severe respiratory illness.
- When you're recovering from illness.



## TYPES



**COVID-19** can cause mild cold-like symptoms to severe lung infections. Anti-viral treatment is available for those at higher risk of severe disease and complications.



**Influenza (flu)** generally occurs in the fall and winter months. Young children (under 5) and older adults are at higher risk of severe disease and complications.



**Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)** infects the lungs and airways. Infants, young children and older adults are more likely to have severe infections.



**Coughs and colds (cold viruses)** are more common during the fall and winter months and result from different viruses that infect the nose and throat. For most people, symptoms are mild and usually resolve on their own.



People at **higher risk** of severe illness or complications from COVID-19 and the flu include:

- People who are 60 years and older, pregnant, have chronic medical conditions or are immunocompromised.
- Young children (under 5) are at higher risk of complications from the flu.

## TREATMENT



Most respiratory illnesses can be treated at home. Contact your primary care provider or Health Connect Ontario at 8-1-1 to seek advice for your unique situation.



Treatment for COVID-19 is available and must be taken within a few days of symptoms starting. Learn more at: [Ontario.ca/Antivirals](https://Ontario.ca/Antivirals).

### WHEN TO GO TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

If you or your child are in distress (significant trouble breathing, chest pain, fainting, difficulty to rouse, confusion or have significant worsening of any chronic disease symptoms), go to the nearest Emergency Department or call 9-1-1.

## MORE INFO



[hpePublicHealth.ca/respiratory-illness](https://hpePublicHealth.ca/respiratory-illness)



If you have questions about your health (or your child's), call your primary care provider or Health Connect Ontario at 8-1-1.