

## The common cold

The **common cold** is a mild illness caused by a virus. Symptoms include a blocked and/or runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, watery eyes, coughing and a headache. It generally begins in the nose and throat and occasionally affects the bronchial tubes. It usually goes away in a few days without need for treatment. It is normal to have 2 to 5 colds a year. Little children have them more often.

We can catch fewer colds if we are well-rested, do not smoke and learn to cope with stress. Vitamin C and echinacea help some people to fight colds. There is no cold vaccine.

### How can we treat a cold?

- **Rest** and use common sense to take care of yourself (sleep more, eat right, avoid the cold).  
To relieve headache or fever, taking paracetamol can help as long as you are not allergic to it.
- **Antibiotics cannot cure an ordinary cold.**
- If you are a smoker, you will be better off if you stop smoking for a few days, and you can take advantage to **definitely stop smoking**.
- **Drink plenty of water and herbal infusions.**
- **Inhaling steam will relieve nasal congestion.**
- **Sugar free cough candies will ease a scratchy throat.**  
**Avoid coughing or clearing your throat**

except to get rid of phlegm. Coughing tickles the throat, worsening irritation and making you cough more.

- In order to breathe better at night and reduce dryness and coughing, **place some raw onion on your nightstand.**

- To limit the spread of colds, **wash your hands frequently and use disposable tissues.**



### When to consult a doctor?

You should consult a doctor if you suffer from a bronchial disease or run a temperature for more than 4 days or have any other symptoms besides the ones described.

The **Sanitat Respon** health line provides phone consultations at **112**, or you can phone your primary health care center (CAP).

### People who suffer from asthma:

If you catch a cold you should use an inhaler but you must not take aspirin or use any products containing eucalyptus extracts.

