

# CATCHING A COLD ...OR... FIGHTING THE FLU?

Courtesy: Center for Disease Control, CNN.com, NBC.com

Tis the season for sneezing and coughing, but how can you tell if you're catching a nasty cold or fighting the flu? Common colds usually include sneezing, congestion and runny or stuffy noses. The flu is much worse and can lead to more serious health problems like pneumonia or bacterial infections that result in hospitalization

## **Symptoms of the flu:**

- Fever & Chills
- Body aches
- Extreme fatigue / tiredness
- Intense dry cough
- Some people have diarrhea and vomiting

## **Protect Yourself & Stay Healthy**

- Wash your hands with warm, soapy water especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are also effective
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Practice good health habits. Get plenty of sleep and exercise, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat healthy food.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

## **Caring for Yourself at Home:**

- Drink clear fluids such as Water, Soup Broth or Herbal Tea to stay hydrated
- Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen can be taken to reduce fever & relieve body aches
- Antiviral Medication may help, but only if given within 48-hours of the onset of symptoms.
- Avoid Smoking and Alcohol. Smoking may increase your coughing and could make you more prone to developing bronchitis or pneumonia. Alcohol dehydrates your body.
- Sleep. Allow your body to heal by getting plenty of rest.
- Soothe a sore throat. Gargle with warm salt-water
- Congestion. Use camphor or menthol rubs to clear nasal passages

## **Seek Immediate Medical attention if you experience any of the following:**

- Difficulty breathing / Shortness of Breath
- Pain or pressure in your chest or abdomen
- Severe headache
- Very stiff neck
- Sudden dizziness or Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

## **If you have flu-like symptoms:**

- Don't go to class with a fever. Email your professor to let them know you are sick.
- Stay at home (or in your room) until 24-hours after your fever has gone.
- Call the campus nurse at 388-8885 let them know you are sick so they can arrange wellness checks

