

# DO I HAVE THE FLU?

The CDC says, “**Not all patients with suspected flu infection need to be seen by a health care provider.**”

The following information will help you determine whether you have the flu and what you should do about it.

## Is this a cold or is it flu?

Differentiating the flu from colds and viral illnesses can be difficult. In general the flu is more likely to have fever, muscle aches, headache, fatigue and less likely to have predominant symptoms of sneezing, and nasal congestion.

Symptom	Cold	Flu
Fever	Less common	Sudden onset; >101.4° F
Headache	Mild or absent	Prominent
Muscle aches	Mild or absent	Prominent
Fatigue, weakness	Mild or absent	Extreme
Runny nose/ congestion/ sneezing	Common	Less common
Cough	Less common	Common, dry hacking at onset
Eye symptoms	Watery eyes	Sensitivity to light, pain on motion, often red eyes
Diarrhea/vomiting	Rare	Up to 25% have nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
Sore throat	Often	Often

## What steps can I take to feel better?

**If you have the flu** ([http://www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/pdf/if\\_you\\_have\\_flu.pdf](http://www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/pdf/if_you_have_flu.pdf)) provides information about self-isolation resources on and off campus

**Self care for flu** ([http://www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/pdf/self\\_care\\_flu.pdf](http://www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/pdf/self_care_flu.pdf)) provides information about over the counter medication and other self treatment guidelines

## When should I seek medical care?

If you think you have the flu and you are **pregnant** or have a chronic medical condition (such as asthma, diabetes, cystic fibrosis, or heart disease), or are immune-compromised, you need to speak with a health care provider and will probably need to be seen.

If you have the flu or viral illness and any of the following symptoms or conditions you need to **seek medical evaluation as soon as possible.**

- **Fever greater than 101° or increasing over 2-3 days**
- **Fever that does not resolve with medication such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen**
- **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath (not due to nasal congestion)**
- **Headache or neck stiffness**
- **Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen**
- **Dizziness or confusion**
- **Vomiting**
- **Rash**
- **Difficulty swallowing fluids**
- **Flu-like symptoms that were improving, but now are getting worse**

## How can I make an appointment?

You can **make an appointment online** ([http://www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/basics/online\\_access.cfm](http://www.sa.psu.edu/uhs/basics/online_access.cfm)) or by calling (814) 863-0774. Appointments online fill quickly so if you do not get one online you can call to speak to a nurse.

**Please do not walk into the Student Health Center.** It is best to call first so we can evaluate the need for an appointment and schedule one if necessary.