

Is it the flu, or is it a cold?

Flu is often confused with the common cold, but flu symptoms typically develop more quickly and are more severe than those of a cold.

How the flu infects you

1 Infected person coughs or sneezes, releasing tiny droplets containing virus into air

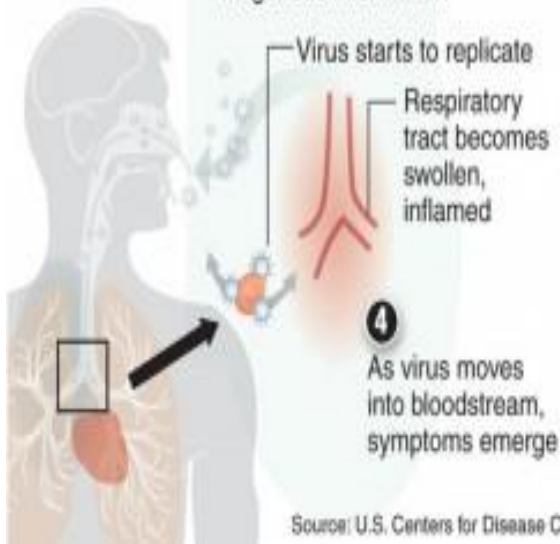
2 Virus enters respiratory tract

3 Virus binds to cells, releases its genetic information

Virus starts to replicate

Respiratory tract becomes swollen, inflamed

4 As virus moves into bloodstream, symptoms emerge



How to compare symptoms

Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Head	Headache rare	Achy
Nose	Runny, sneezing	Stuffy sometimes
Throat	Sore	Sore sometimes
Chest	Severe or hacking cough	Dry cough; can become severe
Appetite	Normal	Decreased
Muscles	Fine	Achy
Onset	Slow	Sudden
Body temperature	Low or no fever, no chills	High fever (over 102°F), chills
Fatigue	Mild	Severe; can last two to three weeks

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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