

Know the Difference

RSV, COLD, FLU and COVID-19



Common symptoms of all four illnesses include fever, cough, feeling tired, runny nose and congestion. It can be difficult to tell these viruses apart, but here are some clues to help:

Symptom	RSV/Bronchiolitis Most often affects young children and the elderly with gradual onset of symptoms that usually peak by days 3–5	Cold Gradual onset of symptoms	Flu Rapid onset of symptoms; more severe symptoms in young children and the elderly	COVID-19 Gradual onset of symptoms
Sneezing	X	X	X	
Sore Throat		X	X	X
Poor Appetite	X		X	X
Headache / Body Aches			X	X
Fever			X	X
Sudden Loss of Taste or Smell				X

**Note: This chart should only be used as a starting point. Symptoms can vary. If your child is sick, talk with your doctor about testing and treatment.*

Call the doctor immediately if your child:

- Shows sign of dehydration (urinating less than once every 8 hours, not producing tears when crying, dryness of the tongue or inside the mouth)
- Is feeding poorly
- Has bloody diarrhea
- Has repeated vomiting for more than 24 hours
- Has chronic health problems such as a heart condition, lung disease or a weakened immune system
- Has a fever:
 - Infants younger than 3 months (12 weeks):** Fever of 100.4°F or higher — Call the doctor immediately
 - Children 3–24 months:** Fever of 100.4°F or higher for 24 hours — Call the doctor during office hours
 - Children 2 years and older:** Fever of 100.4°F or higher for 72 hours (3 days) — Call the doctor during office hours

**If your child looks very ill, is not responding to your voice, is extremely sleepy or difficult to wake, call the doctor immediately or go to the Emergency Department.*

Go to the Emergency Department if your child:

- Is extremely fussy or irritable and cannot be comforted
- Looks very ill, or is unusually hard to wake up
- Has trouble breathing that does not improve with nose suction (pulling in at ribs, breathing fast or hard, wheezing, grunting, has blue lips, tongue, or nails)