

You have a Viral Infection

An information guide



You have a Viral Infection

This leaflet contains discharge advice following your attendance to the Accident & Emergency Department (A&E).

The clinician today has diagnosed you with a viral illness; this could be related to your chest, ears, nose, or throat.

These types of viral illnesses will be referred to as part of the common cold/flu family and will cause symptoms such as:

- A sore throat.
- A blocked or runny nose.
- Sneezing.
- A cough.
- A hoarse voice.
- Generally feeling unwell.

Less common symptoms of a cold include:

- A fever (high temperature) – generally considered to be 38°C (100.4°F) or over.
- A headache.
- Earache – severe earache may be a sign of a middle ear infection.
- Muscle pain.
- Loss of taste and smell.
- Mild irritation of your eyes.
- A feeling of pressure in your ears and face.

The symptoms are usually at their worst during the first two to three days, before they gradually start to improve, they can usually last about 7 to 10 days, but can last longer.

A cough can last two to three weeks.

Telling the difference between a cold and flu

Cold and flu symptoms are similar, but flu tends to be more severe.

Cold symptoms:

- Appear gradually.
- Affects mainly your nose and throat.
- Makes you feel unwell, but you are **OK** to carry on as normal (for example, go to work).

Flu symptoms:

- Appear quickly within a few hours.
- Affect more than just your nose and throat.
- Makes you feel exhausted and too unwell to carry on as normal.

YOU DO NOT NEED ANY ANTIBIOTICS

Look after yourself at home by:

- Taking over-the-counter painkillers, such as paracetamol or, ibuprofen to reduce any fever or discomfort.
- Resting.
- Drinking **plenty** of fluids.
- Eat healthily.
- Use decongestants sprays or tablets to relieve a blocked nose.
- Trying remedies such as gargling salt water, throat sprays or lozenges and sucking menthol sweets.

Many painkillers and decongestants are available from pharmacies without a prescription. Always take medication according to the manufacturer's instructions.

See you GP

You need to contact your GP if:

- Your symptoms persist for more than three weeks.
- Your symptoms get suddenly worse.
- You have difficulty breathing or short of breath.
- You develop complications of a cold, such as chest pain or coughing up bloodstained mucus.

Out of hours – You can also contact GP out of hours service for advice using 111

If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service

Jeśli angielski nie jest twoim pierwszym językiem i potrzebujesz pomocy, skontaktuj się z działem tłumaczeń ustnych i pisemnych

اگر انگریزی آپ کی پہلی زبان نہیں ہے اور آپ کو مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو ، براہ کرم ترجمانی اور ترجمہ خدمت سے رابطہ کریں

Dacă engleza nu este prima ta limbă și ai nevoie de ajutor, te rugăm să contactezi Serviciul de interpretare și traducere

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إذا لم تكن الإنجليزية هي لغتك الأولى وتحتاج إلى مساعدة ، فيرجى الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة الشفوية والتحريرية

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For advice on stopping smoking contact the Specialist Stop Smoking Service on 01706 517 522

For general enquiries please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0161 604 5897

For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact 0161 624 0420 and the Switchboard Operator will put you through to the correct department / service

The Northern Care Alliance NHS Group (NCA) is one of the largest NHS organisations in the country, employing 17,000 staff and providing a range of hospital and community healthcare services to around 1 million people across Salford, Oldham, Bury, Rochdale and surrounding areas. Our Care Organisations are responsible for providing our services, delivering safe, high quality and reliable care to the local communities they serve.

The NCA brings together Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust and the hospitals and community services of The Royal Oldham Hospital, Fairfield General Hospital in Bury, and Rochdale Infirmary (currently part of The Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust).

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