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Title

Viral Nasopharyngitis – Common Cold (Mr. Biondo)

NAME
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Before we discuss the common cold it is important to understand the difference between a viral infection and a bacterial infection. Bacteria are living organisms and are 100 times larger than viruses. They have to be in order to house all of the components needed to reproduce themselves. Therefore, bacteria are self-contained and do not need help from other living body or material. Bacteria do not need a host to live, it is self-sufficient. Bacteria will reproduce and reproduce until it is killed off by some sort of chemical agent. This could be chlorine bleach or an antibiotic. Viruses must have assistance from another living organism to reproduce. Viruses are "hitchhikers" or "invaders". They are without the proper genetic tools in order to make genetic copies of themselves. Viruses actually cut holes in cells and invade them. The virus will then use the genetic tools from the cell to reproduce and make more copies of it. The virus will continue to make copies of it until the cell gets full and bursts. Now, many copies of that virus will now invade new cells. Viruses will never die, they can only be controlled. When a person builds up enough antibodies to fight the virus, the antibodies (soldier cells) take away the virus's mode of transmission of getting into a cell. "Cover the hole maker". The virus will still be there, however, your antibodies have now controlled the spreading of the virus. Your immune system also produces cells called phagocytes which will consume or devour a neutralized virus. Your body makes antibodies specific to each virus. Some viruses can only be controlled at best. Others cannot be controlled at all.

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- (Description and Signs and Symptoms)** Viral nasopharyngitis is also known as the common cold. The common cold is a viral infection of your upper respiratory tract — your nose and throat. A common cold is usually harmless, although it may not feel that way. If it's not a runny nose, sore throat and cough, it's the watery eyes, sneezing and congestion — or maybe all of the above. In fact, because any one of more than 100 viruses can cause a common cold, signs and symptoms tend to vary greatly.
- (Causes)** Although more than 100 viruses can cause a common cold, the rhinovirus is the most common culprit, and it's highly contagious. A cold virus enters your body through your mouth or nose. The virus can spread through droplets in the air when someone who is sick coughs, sneezes or talks. But it also spreads by hand-to-hand contact with someone who has a cold or by using shared objects, such as utensils, towels, toys or telephones. If you touch your eyes, nose or mouth after such contact or exposure, you're likely to "catch" a cold.
- (Treatments)** There's no cure for the common cold. Antibiotics are of no use against cold viruses. Over-the-counter (OTC) cold preparations won't cure a common cold or make it go away any sooner, and most have side effects. Here's a look at the pros and cons of some common cold remedies.
 - Pain relievers. For fever, sore throat and headache, many people turn to acetaminophen (Tylenol, others) or other mild pain relievers.
 - Decongestant nasal sprays. Adults shouldn't use decongestant drops or sprays for more than a few days because prolonged use can cause chronic rebound inflammation of mucous membranes.
 - Cough syrups. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommend against giving OTC cough and cold medicines to children younger than age 2.
- (Prognosis)** No vaccine has been developed for the common cold, which can be caused by many different viruses. But you can take some common-sense precautions to slow the spread of cold viruses: 1. Wash your hands. 2. Scrub your stuff. Keep kitchen and bathroom countertops clean, especially when someone in your family has a common cold. Wash children's toys periodically. 3. Use tissues. 4. Don't share. Don't share drinking glasses or utensils with other family members. 5. Steer clear of colds. Avoid close, prolonged contact with anyone who has a cold. Get plenty of sleep at night.

Questions:

True or False The common cold is a bacterial infection.

True or False Taking medication will only relieve the symptoms and not cure the common cold.

Some ways you can prevent yourself from getting the common cold are:

- Wash your hands frequently.
- Avoid prolonged, close contact with anyone who is sick.
- Keep bathroom and kitchen countertops clean.
- All of the above.
- A and C only.

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