COVID-19 and the flu are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by two different viruses. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing the spread of respiratory illnesses, like the flu, this fall and winter are more important than ever.

**What are symptoms of the flu?**

People who have the flu often feel some or all of these symptoms that usually start suddenly.

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Extreme tiredness
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
  (more common in children)

*Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure*

**How do these viruses spread?**

- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes
- Can be spread when a person touches a surface with a virus on it and then touches their mouth, eyes or nose

**How to prevent COVID-19 and the flu**

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and dispose of the tissue immediately
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Wash your hands frequently

**What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of taste or smell
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea


**Wash your hands**

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- Wash especially after going to the bathroom, before eating and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- If soap is not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol

**Facemasks**

- The CDC recommends wearing a facemask in public to prevent the transmission of the flu and COVID-19 in settings where social distancing measures are difficult to maintain

**Getting your flu vaccine**

- Flu shots decrease the likelihood of hospitalization or death
- The vaccine can help reduce the burden on our healthcare systems responding to the pandemic and save medical resources for COVID-19 patients
- It is recommended that you get your flu shot in the fall

COVID-19 and the flu are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by two different viruses. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, reducing the spread of respiratory illnesses, like the flu, this fall and winter are more important than ever.

### The difference between Covid-19, cold and flu symptoms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Coronavirus</th>
<th>Cold</th>
<th>Flu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>Common (usually mild)</td>
<td>Common (usually mild)</td>
<td>Common (usually dry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Common (usually dry)</td>
<td>Common (usually mild)</td>
<td>Common (usually dry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cough</td>
<td>Common (usually dry)</td>
<td>Common (usually mild)</td>
<td>Common (usually dry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of sense of taste/smell</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sneezing</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aches and pains</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runny or stuffy nose</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sore throat</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Common</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhoea</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sometimes (for children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headaches</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>Common</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortness of breath</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guardian graphic. Source: NHS, WHO, CDC

Coronavirus symptoms: How to tell if you have the common cold, flu or Covid (2020, October 9). Retrieved October 21 from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/21/coronavirus-symptoms-how-to-tell-if-you-have-a-common-cold-flu-or-covid