

# COMMUNICABLE DISEASES NEWSLETTER

JOPLIN/JASPER COUNTY

Volume 8, Issue 5

October-December 2015

## Cold vs. Flu

**'Tis the season** for sore throats, runny noses, headaches, fevers, and body aches! Since the flu and the common cold share symptoms, how do you know which one you might have? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention outlines the differences between these two sicknesses that are occurring the most this time of year. Be aware of these symptoms to know what treatments you might need.

### *Did You Know?*

*The flu vaccine was first used during World War II to protect the military against the flu.*

Symptoms	Cold	Influenza
Fever	Rare	Usual; high (100°F to 102°F); lasts 3-4 days
Headache	Rare	Common
Aches & Pains	Slight	Usual; often severe
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual; can last up to 2 to 3 weeks
Exhaustion	Never	Usual; at the beginning of illness
Stuffy Nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore Throat	Common	Sometimes
Chest Pain, cough	Mild to moderate; hacking cough	Common; can become severe

Adapted from [CDC](#) and [Anthem BCBS](#)

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# Flu Season

**Influenza** (also known as the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by flu viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The flu is different from a cold. The flu usually comes on suddenly. People who have the flu often feel some or all of these symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue (tiredness), and sometimes vomiting or diarrhea (usually in children). Most people who get influenza will recover in a few days to less than two weeks.

People with flu can spread it to others up to about 6 feet away. Most experts think that flu viruses are spread mainly by droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Less often, a person might also get flu by touching a surface or object that has flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth or nose.

To avoid this, people should stay away from sick people and stay home if sick. It also is important to wash hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub. Linens, eating utensils, and dishes belonging to those who are sick should not be shared without washing thoroughly first. Further, frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at home, work and school, especially if someone is ill.

Flu season began in October this year and will last through May of 2016. Most healthy adults infected with the flu may be able to infect other people beginning 1 day **before** symptoms develop and up to 5 to 7 days **after** becoming sick. Children may pass the virus for longer than 7 days. Symptoms start 1 to 4 days after the virus enters the body. **That means that you may be able to pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.** Some people can be infected with the flu virus but have no symptoms. During this time, those persons may still spread the virus to others. CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and older as the first and most important step in protecting against seasonal flu viruses. A flu vaccine offers the best protection against this serious disease. Once vaccinated, it takes about 2 weeks for the body's immune response to fully kick in.



Source: CDC

Source: [CDC](http://www.cdc.gov)

## Flu Activity for Joplin and Jasper County October 2015—December 2015

Table 1, Jasper County

Type of Influenza	Season—TD	% of Total
Influenza A	3	21.4
Influenza B	11	78.6
Untyped/Unknown	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2, Joplin County

Type of Influenza	Season—TD	% of Total
Influenza A	7	28.0
Influenza B	18	72.0
Untyped/Unknown	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## How to Protect Yourself and Others

You can help reduce your risk of getting a cold:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay away from people who are sick.

If you have a cold, you should follow these tips to prevent viruses from spreading to other people:

- Stay at home while you are sick.
- Avoid close contact with others, such as hugging, kissing, or shaking hands.
- Move away from people before coughing or sneezing.
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue then throw it away, or cough and sneeze into your upper shirt sleeve, completely covering your mouth and nose.
- Wash your hands after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, and objects such as toys and doorknobs.

There is no vaccine to protect you against the common cold.

Source: [CDC](#)



Source: CDC

## Common Cold

**Common colds** are the main reason that children miss school and adults miss work. Each year in the United States, there are millions of cases of the common cold. Adults have an average of 2-3 colds per year, and children have even more.

Most people get colds in the winter and spring, but it is possible to get a cold at any time of the year. Symptoms usually include sore throat, runny nose, coughing, sneezing, watery eyes, headaches, and body aches. Most people recover within about 7-10 days. However, people with weakened immune systems, asthma, or respiratory conditions may develop serious illness, such as pneumonia.

Many different viruses can cause the common cold, but rhinoviruses are the most common. Viruses that cause colds can spread from infected people to others through the air and close personal contact. You can also get infected through contact with stool or respiratory secretions from an infected person. This can happen when you shake hands with someone who has a cold, or touch a doorknob that has viruses on it, then touch your eyes, mouth, or nose.

There is no cure for a cold. To feel better, you should get lots of rest and drink plenty of fluids. Over-the-counter medicines may help ease symptoms but will not make your cold go away any faster. Always read the label and use medications as directed. Talk to your doctor before giving your child nonprescription cold medicines, since some medicines contain ingredients that are not recommended for children. Antibiotics will not help you recover from a cold. They do not work against viruses, and they may make it harder for your body to fight future bacterial infections if you take them unnecessarily.

You should call your doctor if you or your child has one or more of these conditions: a temperature higher than 100.4°F, symptoms that last more than 10 days, or symptoms that are severe or unusual.

If your child is younger than 3 months old and has a fever, you should always call your doctor right away. Your doctor can determine if you or your child has a cold and can recommend therapy to help with symptoms.

Source: [CDC](#)

**Table 3, Communicable Diseases Reported in Joplin/Jasper County:  
2014 and 2015 (January-December)**

CUMMULATIVE CASES	JOPLIN		JASPER	
	2014	2015	2014	2015
	CAMPYLOBACTERIOSIS	5	17	9
COCCIDIOIDOMYCOSIS	0	1	0	0
CRYPTOSPORIDIOSIS	3	5	2	11
E COLI SHIGA TOXIN POSITIVE	1	1	2	5
E. COLI O157 H7	0	0	1	5
EHRlichia CHAFFEENSIS	0	5	0	5
GIARDIASIS	0	0	1	4
HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE	0	1	0	5
HEMOLYTIC UREMIC SYNDROME	0	0	0	2
HEPATITIS B (PREGNANCY)	0	0	1	2
HEPATITIS B (ACUTE)	2	3	2	4
HEPATITIS B (CHRONIC)	4	6	1	12
HEPATITIS C (CHRONIC)	44	77	27	95
LEGIONELLOSIS	0	0	1	2
LYME	0	0	0	0
MYCOBACTERIUM OTHER THAN TB (MOTT)	8	11	7	8
PERTUSSIS	0	2	0	0
RABIES POST EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS	2	4	2	2
ROCKY MOUNTAIN SPOTTED FEVER	1	0	0	8
SALMONELLOSIS	1	12	0	21
SHIGELLOSIS	0	0	0	3
STREP DISEASE (GROUP A INVASIVE)	2	1	1	1
STREP PNEUMONIAE (<5 YRS INVASIVE)	1	0	0	0
TB DISEASE	0	1	1	3
TB INFECTION	15	17	7	37
VARICELLA (CHICKENPOX)	1	4	3	10

**Key**

2015 more than 2014	
2015 less than 2014	

Source: DHSS

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**Table 4, Sexually Transmitted Diseases: Jasper County  
January—October, 2015**

		Total
Jasper County	Chlamydia	448
	Gonorrhea	48
	Syphilis	6

According to the data in Table 4, there was a total of 502 STD cases in Jasper County, January through October of 2015. The numbers continue to show that chlamydia has the highest occurrence in Jasper County, with a total of 448 cases. Additionally, syphilis remains to be the least occurring sexually transmitted disease in Jasper County.

Source: DHSS