

Is It Covid, RSV or the Flu?

What you need to know about these common respiratory viruses

Every year, respiratory viruses like flu, Covid and RSV cause millions of people to get sick and thousands of people to die.



You can lower your risk by getting vaccinated.

Did you know?

People over 65 and those who are immunocompromised should get a 2nd Covid vaccine 6 months after their first dose.

Who is at risk for respiratory infections?

Everyone is at risk for respiratory infections, but some people are at higher risk for severe disease or hospitalization.

You are considered high risk for a severe case of flu or Covid if you:

Flu or Covid

- ☐ Are 65 years or older
- ☐ Are pregnant
- ☐ Have a weakened immune system
- ☐ Have certain health conditions, such as:
 - Heart disease
 - Obesity
 - Asthma

You are considered high risk for a severe case of RSV if you:

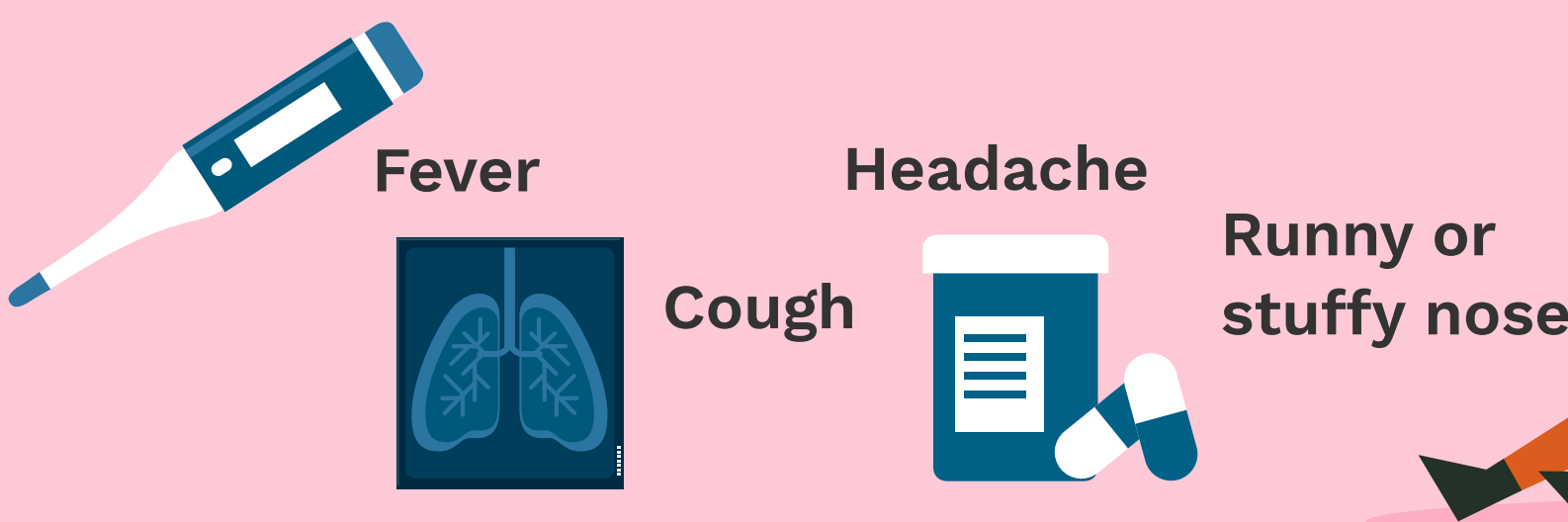
RSV

- ☐ Are 75 years or older
- ☐ Are 60–74 years old and living in a long-term care facility
- ☐ Have certain health conditions, such as:
 - Heart, lung & kidney disease
 - Obesity
 - Diabetes
 - Asthma

How can you tell the difference between these infections?

The flu, Covid and RSV all cause similar symptoms that can range from mild to deadly.

The common symptoms of these 3 viruses include:



Other symptoms are more common in certain viruses than others.

	Flu	Covid	RSV
Muscle pain/body aches	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
Difficulty breathing	Rarely	Often	Sometimes
Fatigue or weakness	Often	Often	Rarely
Fever	Often (can be high, up to 103 or 104)	Sometimes (mild fever of 99 or 100)	Sometimes (mild fever of 99 or 100)
Loss of taste or smell	Rarely	Sometimes	Rarely
Sore throat	Sometimes	Often	Rarely
Wheezing	Rarely	Rarely	Often
Chills	Often	Often	Rarely
Sneezing	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
Diarrhea/vomiting	Sometimes	Sometimes	Rarely

One way to help you figure out which virus you have is how quickly symptoms come on.

Flu comes on quickly and is felt all over the body.

Covid and RSV often start slowly with sniffles, followed in the next day or two by cough and headache.

The only way to know for sure is to get tested.

Vaccines to protect you from flu, Covid and RSV

Vaccines can help keep symptoms mild and help prevent severe disease and hospitalization.

- Flu and Covid vaccines are recommended for:
- ☐ **Everyone 6 months and older**

It is especially important to get vaccinated against the flu and Covid if you are 65 or older or are at high risk of severe disease.

The RSV vaccine is recommended for adults:

- ☐ **Ages 75 and older**
- ☐ **Ages 60 or older in nursing homes or with certain health conditions**
- ☐ **32–36 weeks pregnant during RSV season**