

## Rhinovirus (common cold)

The common cold is caused by a virus. More than 200 different viruses are known to cause the common cold, one such type is the rhinovirus. The virus can live up to 3 hours on your skin and up to 3 hours on objects such as telephones and doorknobs.

Symptoms of a cold include: slight fever (may be high in infants and young children), sneezing, coughing, mucus buildup in the nose, swelling of the sinuses, headache, and sore throat. Symptoms can last from 2-14 days, but most people will recover in about a week.

Transmission of the rhinovirus occurs by either touching your skin or other surfaces that have the virus and then touching the eyes and nose or inhaling drops of mucus full of the virus from the air when a contagious person sneezes or coughs.

Treatment involves relieving the symptoms as the body fights the viral infection. Some measures to take include: drink plenty of fluids, rest if you have a fever, cool-mist humidifier, gargle with warm salt water or use throat spray or lozenges, pain relievers (Tylenol) for headache and fever.

Prevention methods: wash hands regularly, keep hands away from the nose, mouth and eyes, limit exposure to infected people, and practice healthy habits (good nutrition, exercise and regular sleep).

If cold symptoms do not clear up within 10-14 days or get worse as time goes on, visit your physician to rule out possible complications such as pneumonia or sinus infection.