

Dear Parents,

We have had a few flu cases at Coyle and Cassidy. We also have the usual colds going around. Tis the season.

I thank you in advance for making sure your child stays home when showing signs and symptoms of the Flu, or any communicable illness. The rest, increased fluids and prescribed medications will ensure that they make a more rapid recovery and it also helps keep the cross contamination down in our school.

Please send in a physician's note with a diagnosis if your child see's their PCP and is diagnosed with the Flu. This is the only way we have of tracking our cases.

Please note that these are the signs and symptoms of very different infections that we are currently seeing this winter. The only way to truly differentiate between them is to have your child seen and diagnosed by your medical provider.

A cold is a milder respiratory illness than the flu. While cold symptoms can make you feel bad for a few days, flu symptoms can make you feel quite ill for a few days to weeks. The flu can also result in serious health problems such as pneumonia and hospitalizations.

Signs and symptoms of Influenza infection include:

- **Muscle pain**
- **Cough:** can be dry or with phlegm
- **Whole body:** chills, dehydration, fatigue, fever, flushing, loss of appetite, body ache, or sweating
- **Nasal:** congestion, runny nose, or sneezing
- **Also common:** chest discomfort, head congestion, headache, nausea, shortness of breath, sore throat, or swollen lymph nodes

<https://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/flu-cold-symptoms#1>

Signs and symptoms of a cold include:

Symptoms of a common cold usually appear one to three days after exposure to a cold-causing virus. Signs and symptoms, which can vary from person to person, might include:

- **Runny or stuffy nose**
- **Sore throat**
- **Cough**
- **Congestion**
- **Slight body aches or a mild headache**
- **Sneezing**
- **Low-grade fever**
- **Generally feeling unwell (malaise)**

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/common-cold/symptoms-causes/syc-20351605>

It is possible for you or your child to have many of these signs and symptoms but not have strep throat. The cause of these signs and symptoms could be a viral infection or some other illness. That is why your doctor generally tests specifically for strep throat.

Signs and symptoms of strep throat can include:

- **Throat pain-** that usually comes on quickly.
- **Painful swallowing.**
- **Red and swollen tonsils-** sometimes with white patches or streaks of pus.
- **Tiny red spots on the area at the back of the roof of the mouth (soft or hard palate)**
- **Swollen, tender lymph nodes in your neck.**
- **Fever.**
- **Headache**
- **Rash**
- **Nausea or vomiting, especially in younger children**
- **Body aches**

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/strep-throat/symptoms-causes/syc-20350338>

Common-sense precautions to slow the spread of viruses:

- **Wash your hands.** Clean your hands thoroughly and often with soap and water, and teach your children the importance of hand-washing. If soap and water aren't available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Disinfect your stuff.** Clean kitchen and bathroom countertops with disinfectant, especially when someone in your family has a cold.
- **Use tissues.** Sneeze and cough into tissues. Discard used tissues right away, then wash your hands carefully. Teach children to sneeze or cough into the bend of their elbow when they don't have a tissue. That way they cover their mouths without using their hands.
- **Don't share.** Don't share drinking glasses or utensils with other family members. Use your own glass or disposable cups when you or someone else is sick. Label the cup or glass with the name of the person with the cold.
- **Steer clear of colds.** Avoid close contact with anyone who has a cold.
- **Take care of yourself.** Eating well, getting exercise and enough sleep, and managing stress might help you keep colds at bay.